

10 AMAZING PLAYABLE DEMOS ON YOUR FREE PS2 DVD!



PlayStation® 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

AUSSIE EXCLUSIVE!

ENTER THE MATRIX

MASSIVE 6 page preview
of The One for 2003!

The Ring

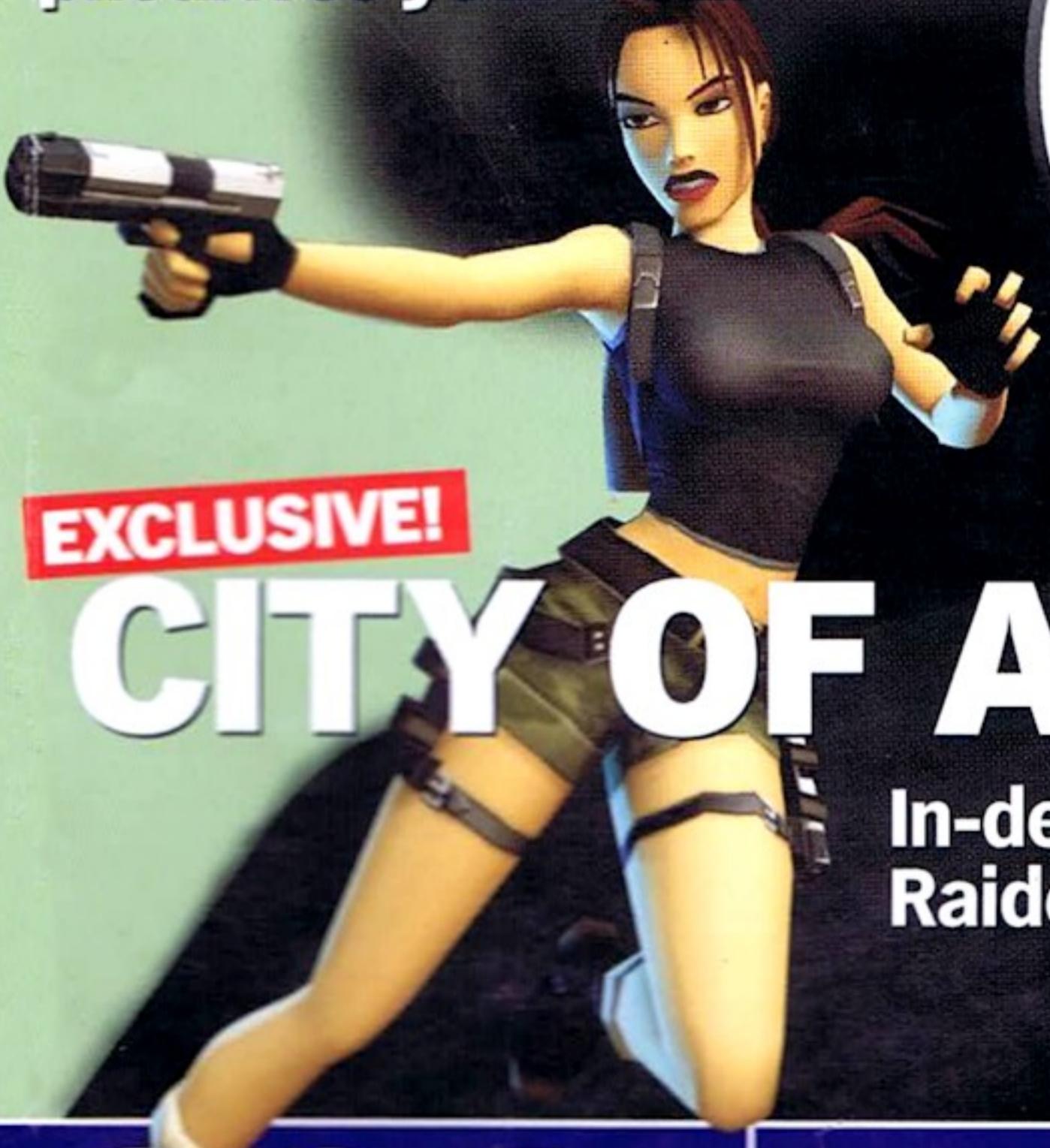
First details on The Hobbit!
Bilbo's adventures revealed!

YOU'LL BE RAPPED

We rap up the EXCLUSIVE
review of Def Jam Vendetta!

Crushed!

WWE Crush Hour
piledrives your PS2!



EXCLUSIVE!

CITY OF ANGELS

In-depth look at Tomb
Raider: Angel of Darkness!

200

GAMES RATED!

- Vexx
- Jurassic Park
- Shinobi
- NBA Street 2
- NBA 2K3
- NHL 2K3
- Dark Angel
- Dakar 2

Halo beater!

Starcraft: Ghost takes aim
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PlayStation® 2



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ISSUE 14 // MAY 2003

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Enter The Matrix is here!



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Find out if the rapping wrestlers piledrive it home harder than the WWE boys!

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Can Sega's killer ninja game out-slice Tenchu?

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It may not be Ratchet & Clank but it's still cool!

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036 INTERVIEW

OPS2 talks to the man behind the brutal fighter, *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*!

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The onslaught of quality PS2 titles continues. OPS2 put the latest wave of games through their paces.

076 MEDIA DVD

This month's reviews: *Road to Perdition*, *Signs*, *The Bourne Identity* and *Vandread*.

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082 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Save money and receive a free game! Each subscriber has a chance to win free games!

084 HARDCORE

This month's guide: OPS2 walks you through the trickiest bits of *007 Nightfire*. Plus tips & cheats for *Vice City*, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, *Mortal Kombat* and more!

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092 SHORTLIST

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There's a massive *X-Men 2* game, movie and DVD giveaway!

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We've played with Lara and we liked it!

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Playing with Bilbo's ring – what could be more fun?

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Big guns, lots of drooling aliens to kill and the ability to pilot any spaceship you walk into – too cool!

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Tony Hawk on water – 'nuff said.

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With unprecedented access to the cast, crew and world of *The Matrix* movies, *Enter The Matrix* is set to be the ultimate movie-to-game experience!

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052 GAME ONLINE

It won't be long before you're all taking your gaming skills online. To help you prepare for this brave new world OPS2 has nutted together some previews of the hottest online games!

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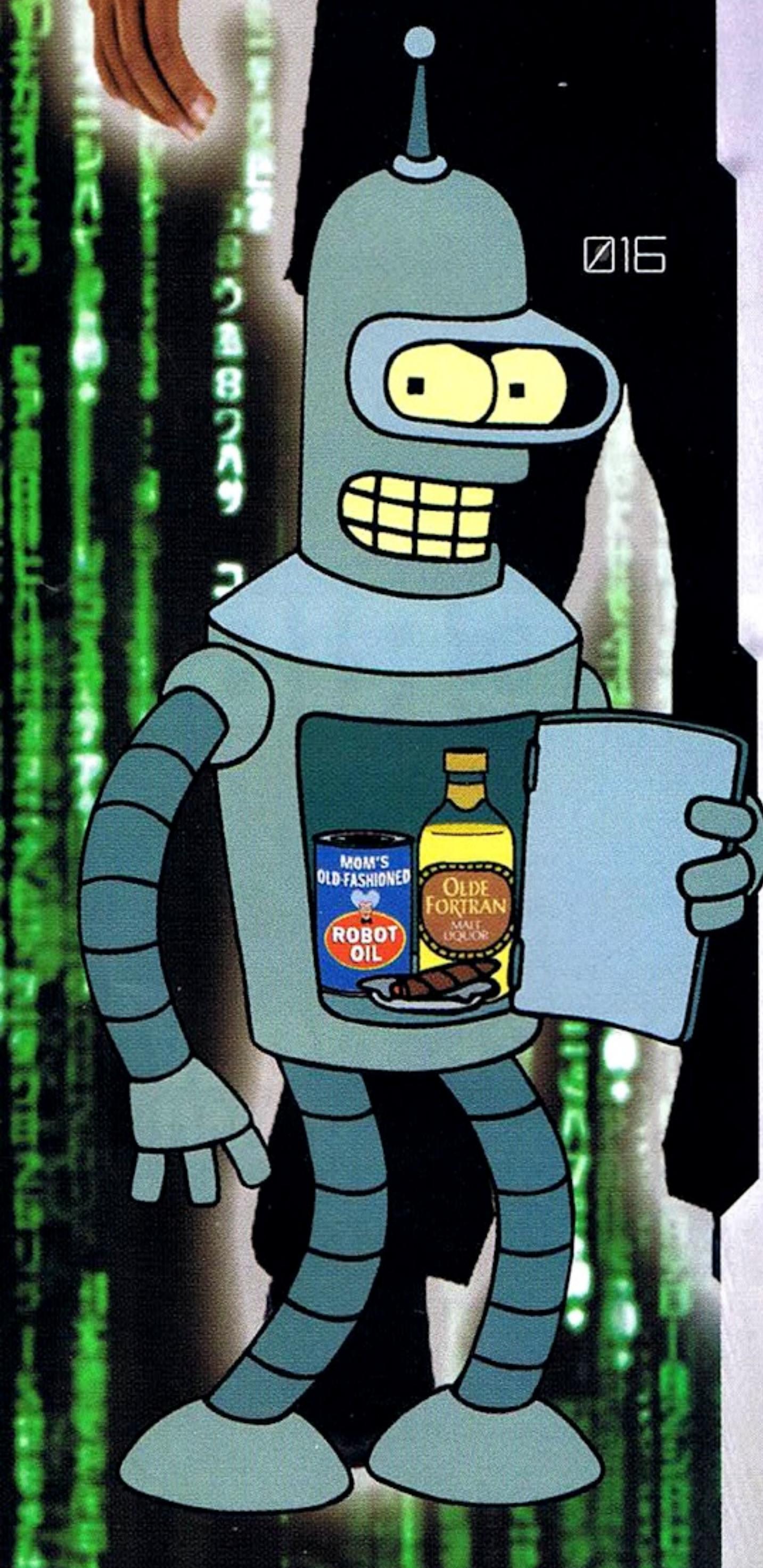
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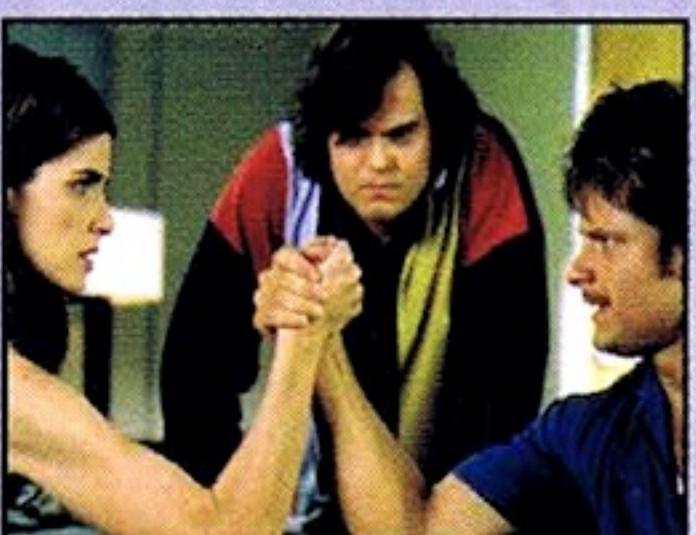
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NAZ'S TOP 2

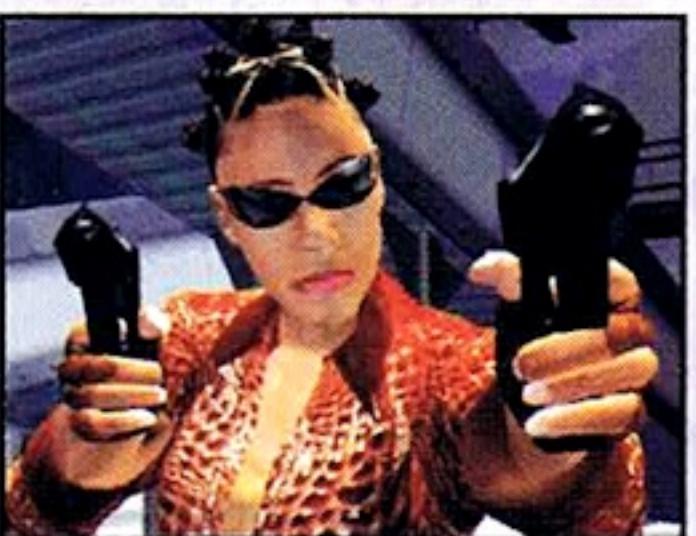
EVIL WOMAN

(ROADSHOW) OUT NOW

Yeah, I know it's not a game, but don't forget PS2's also play DVDs. *Evil Woman* was the funniest 90 minutes I've seen since I last watched Richie try to play *Tony Hawk*. Is there anything Jack Black can't do?

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY (TAKE 2) OUT NOW

It's been a couple of months since I last toured the city, so I jumped back in - and hot diggity if it isn't still the best game in the world! My first store robbery turned into a bloodbath - 14 cars full of cops and feds bit the dust before they finally took me down!



JASON'S TOP 2

ENTER THE MATRIX

(INFOGRAPHICS) MAY

Who hasn't been hanging for this game ever since they saw the Wachowski boys' masterpiece in all its bullet-time glory? This may just be the crossover that lives up to the licence. Here's hoping.

RESIDENT EVIL ONLINE

(THQ) TBA

How cool does this whole concept sound? Shooting apart un-dead zombie hoards alongside your bestest pals via your online connection. We can all pee our pants in terror together!



"we have the information you've been dying to hear"

EDITOR'S LETTER



Mental note to self: Restrain yourself. Withhold all information! Anyone that happens to think that my job is all fun and games couldn't be further from the truth. Nope! In fact, this last month has been one of my most difficult ever, and it's all because I've been struggling to keep my mouth shut...

"What's this guy rambling on about?" Okay, allow me one minute to explain... Anyone who's followed the PlayStation 2 since it launched in 2000, and indeed the monthly coverage in OPS2, will be well aware that the most popular console ever has gone from strength to strength, month after month. Well, here in OPS2 Towers, we've just had exciting news on the online front, and we have the information that you've been dying to hear.

What's been killing me is that, until final testing is thoroughly complete - I can't let the cat out of the proverbial bag. Not quite yet anyway. What I can assure you of though, is that we'll let you know whatever we can, as soon as we can, and we're certain you'll find our Game Online feature in this very issue informative and err, mouth-watering! You should also rest assured that OPS2 will be a major information source for getting your PS2 online - and the team is actually going to be involved in the online testing first hand.

Our direct link to Sony has allowed us such confidential information and we can also see that they are absolutely committed to making this happen quickly and with the quality you'd expect from Sony. The exhaustive testing is simply because Sony are determined to provide a service that's easy-to-use, quick and cheaper than other broadband options - and that's something you just can't argue with.

So until OPS2 breaks with all the final "straight-from-the-horse's-mouth" information in an issue soon, sit back, relax and enjoy your new playable demos and the most accurate source of gaming news anywhere.

Cheers,

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor



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SUBSCRIBE NOW TO GO IN THE DRAW!

With an OPS2 subscription you can get 12 issues at just \$10.41* each. That's a MASSIVE 30% off the cover price!

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As a special treat, Official PlayStation Magazine in conjunction with Sony Computer Entertainment Australia are offering an offer just too good to refuse! Get this - everyone who registers before the closing date will have a chance to win their very own copy of the killer *Primal* for PS2! Turn to page 82 for all the details! *Offer applies to Australian residents only

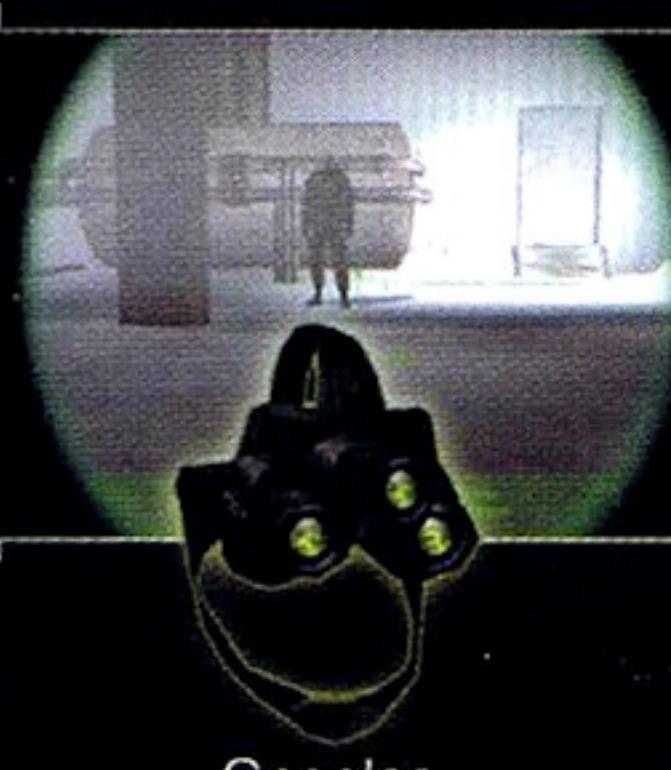
*Counter-terrorism's
silent solution*

Tom Clancy's
SPLINTER CELL

TM

Out Now On PlayStation® 2

New mission, optimised gadgets, exclusive intro and cinematics.



Goggles
with binocular vision



Modular Assault
Weapon System



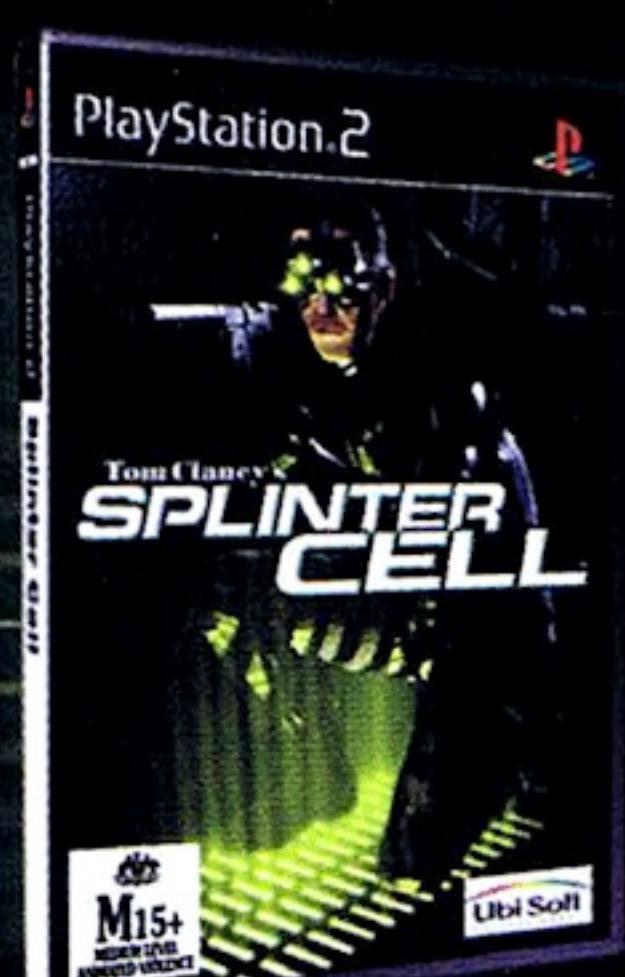
Optic Cable

Available



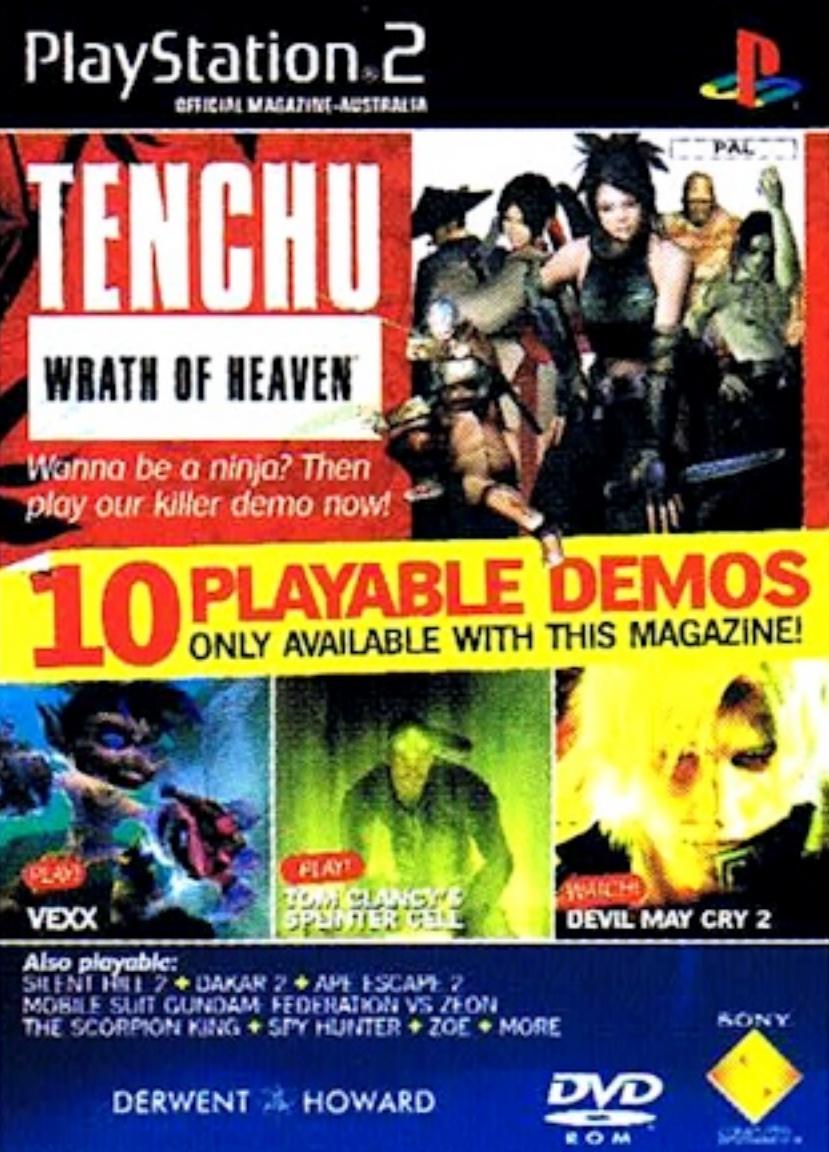
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www.splintercell.com

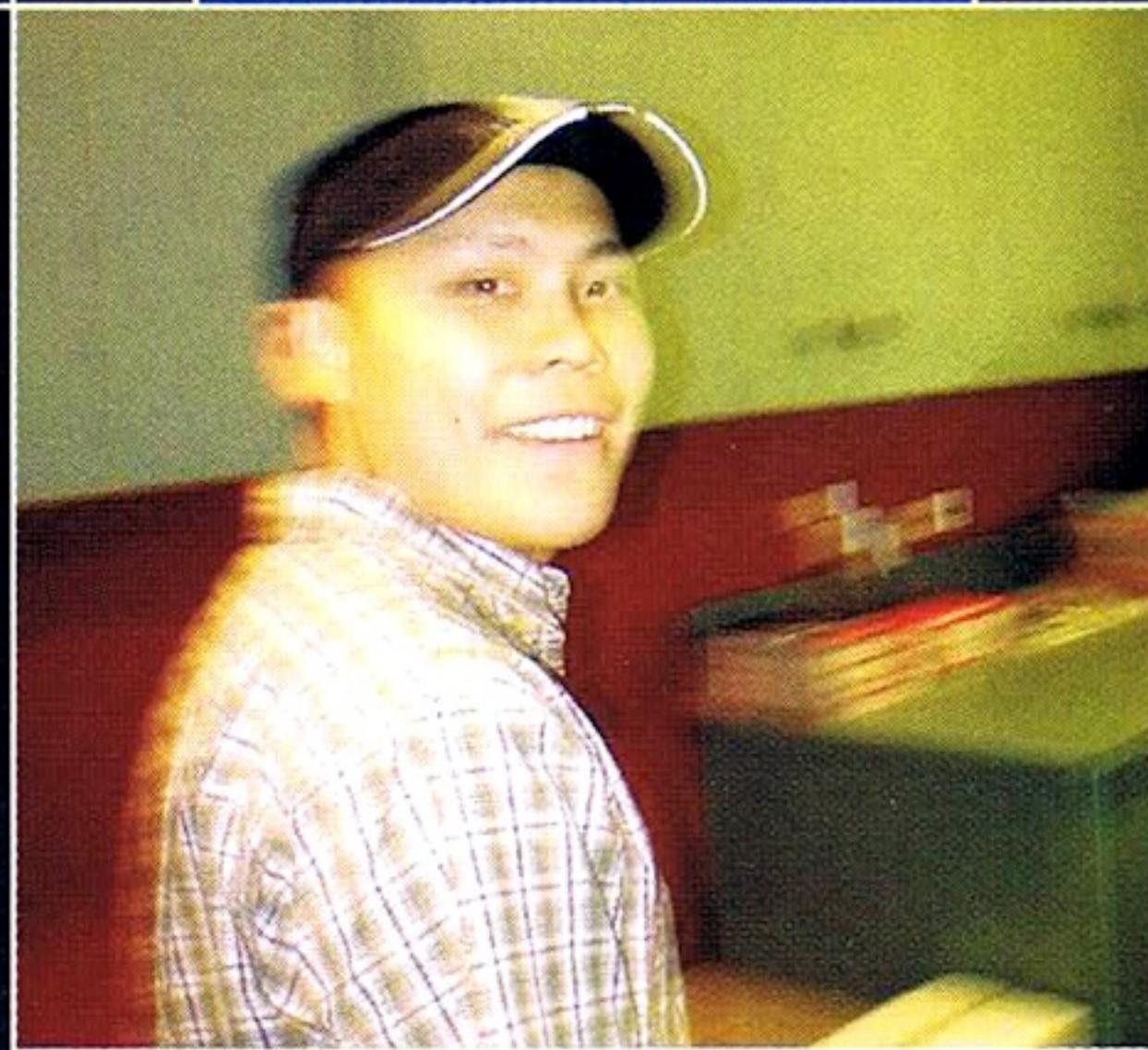




ON THE DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH, OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY...



Hope that this issue finds you in goodstealth. We've been keeping a low profile this month, hiding in shadows and wearing lots of black. Yes, goth is back! No, hang on, that's not it.

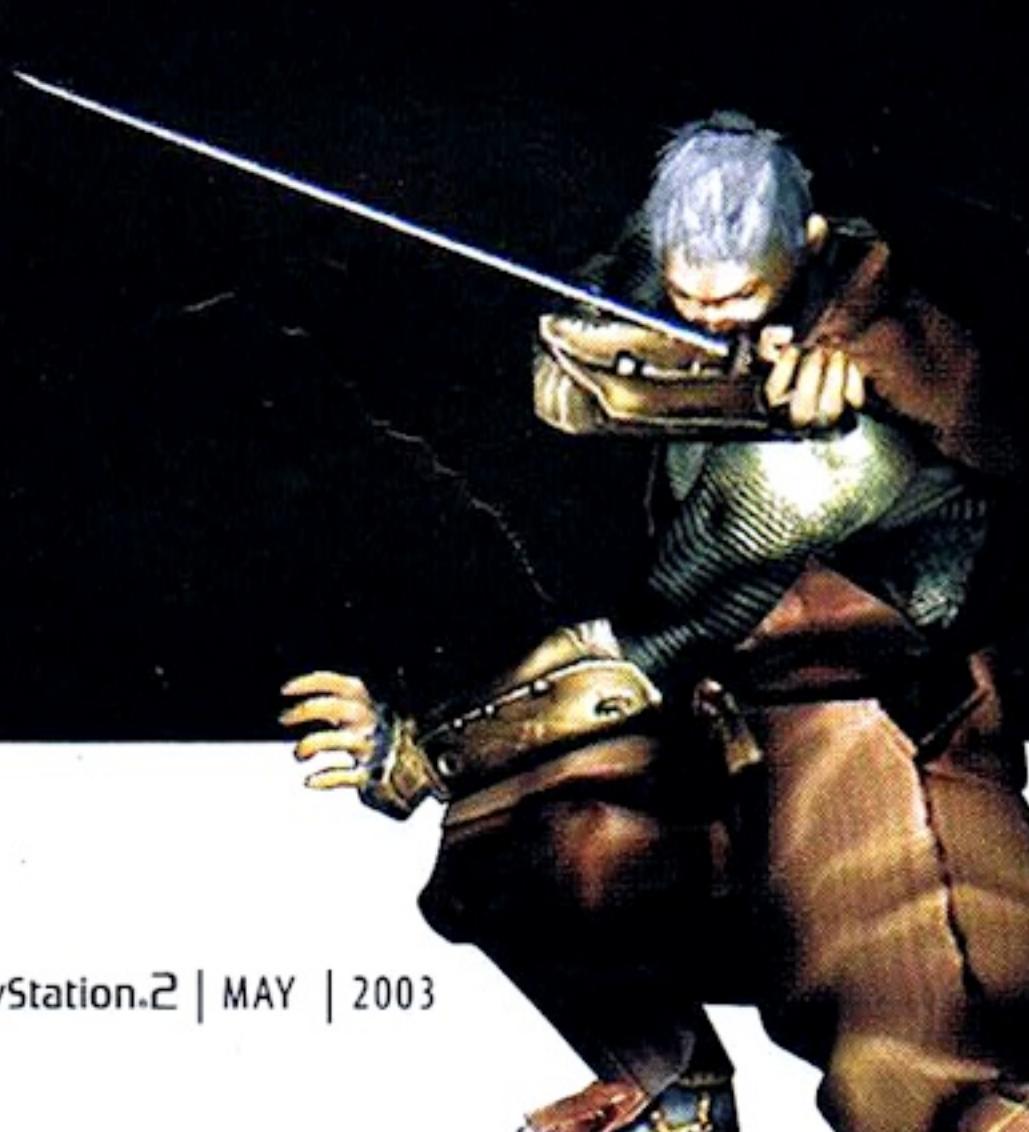
Ah yes, it's because we're celebrating the ultimate culmination of stealth gameplay that began when Solid Snake first decided to sneak up silently behind a guard and snap his neck instead of hollering a war cry, unloading a full clip and then making 'come and get me' gestures at the security camera.

Now stealth is a genre in itself, with every game from *The Getaway* to *Harry Potter* getting in on the undercover act. Alright, so most post-MGS examples of stealth gameplay have been a shambles, but this month there's the amazing *Splinter Cell*, which distils the formula further. It's an adventure played at an entirely different pace in which thrilling tension takes the place of mindless blasting. It also looks stunning. Okay, you can get out from under the cardboard box now...

R. Young

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor

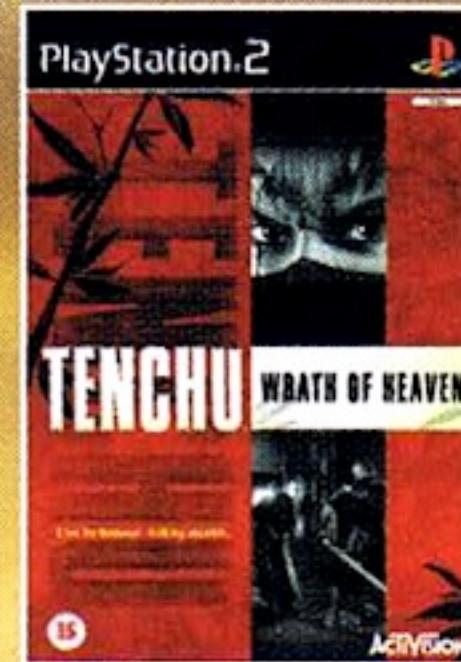
PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the ↓ and ↑ keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⓧ to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.



FANCY A SLASH? Well you've come to the right place. In *Tenchu* you have two choices: sneak past enemies or – better – separate heads from bodies with a deft schwing of your katana.

At the start of the demo, head left to perform a stunning waterfall leap. From here you're in the enemy village and countless courses of action are yours to choose. Experiment a while with your inventory of weapons (press ⓧ). You'll find that there's a weapon or gadget for every eventuality. And do have a rummage on the rooftops to find the handy red boxes which hide other useful items such as throwing stars.

Your most important gadget is your grapple hook (leftmost in your inventory). Use this to scale buildings and reach inaccessible areas. And don't miss the excellent 'disguise' option that will let you change your appearance and sneak up on enemies. If you attack an enemy by surprise they'll die instantly – if they're alerted they'll put up a fight.



PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
GAME TYPE: ACTION/ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

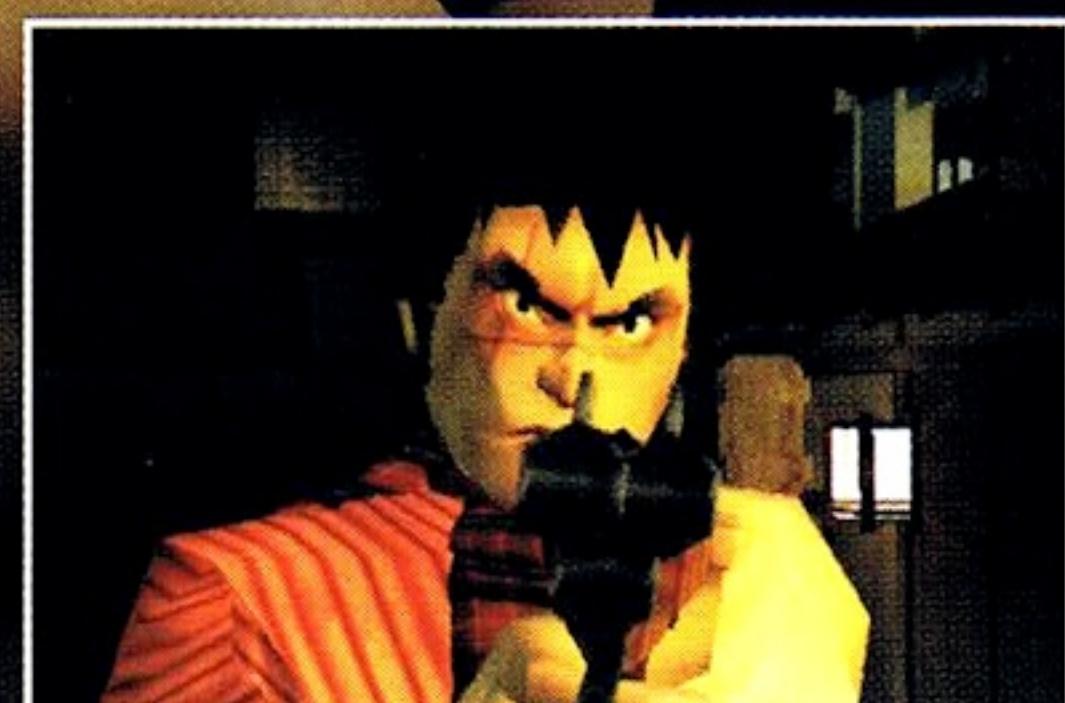
THE CONTROLS	
D-pad	Select item
L-stick	Movement
R-stick	Move camera
Ⓐ	Jump
Ⓑ	Attack
Ⓐ	Use item
Ⓑ	Guard
Ⓐ	Manual camera
Ⓑ	Stealth
Ⓐ	Select item
Ⓑ	Lock on
START	Pause
SELECT	Display map



HACK ATTACK Towards the end of the demo you'll have a battle with this pair:



SLASH FOR COMMENTS Avoid a full-on fight and go for the stealthy option.



challenge

Finishing the demo is easy – you simply have to defeat the second, gun-toting boss – but can you do it without taking a single slug from your cache of energy drinks?

tip

Save your bombs and daggers for the boss battles. A single bomb attack the instant the goons leave the red house will just about finish them off.

PlayStation.2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA



■ **BRIDGE RACER** The demo level is sufficiently huge, with a single obvious objective.

FIRST OF ALL stop and have a good look at the Training screen. Here you'll learn Vexx's special moves – vital if you're to complete the task in this demo. This screen reappears each time you press **START** to pause the game. Handy. Once into the game proper your task is to recover a wraith heart from atop a giant tree littered with obstacles, floating platforms and the usual crowd of platform game nasties.

The orbs will light your way, and there are a multitude of other power-ups to collect en-route. Also, keep an eye out for scalable walls (depicted by a diagonal chequered pattern). You can climb these with the D-pad or by pressing and releasing **X** to leap up.



PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
GAME TYPE: PLATFORMER
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

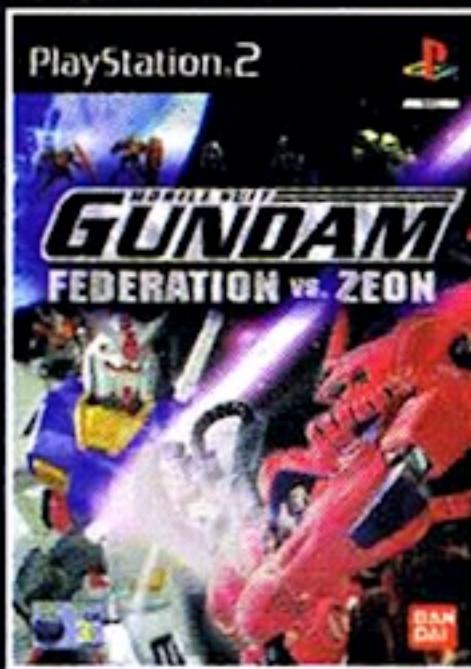
THE CONTROLS

L-stick	Movement
R-stick	Move camera
X	Jump/Helicopter
O	Shoot
A	Inside view
B	Lifebar
1	Strafe/Lock
2	Strafe/Lock
3	Enable special moves
4	Enable special moves
START	Pause



Keep an eye out for the large black orbs. Destroying each of these will reveal another objective or give you a vital game tip.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM FEDERATION vs. ZEON



PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMS
GAME TYPE: ACTION
OUT: TBA
PLAYERS: 1



THE MOTHER OF all playable demos. You want to taste the delights of *Mobile Suit Gundam*? Well help yourself to a 'Japanese banquet for five' of robot stompy action! You can play as either the Federation or Zeon.

Arcade mode will let you indulge in four missions – and the full range of robots are available. Campaign mode similarly features a selection of missions from the full game. Is there no end to this demo's magnitude?

Playing is easy. Your scanner top-right shows the positions of the baddies (in red) and pressing **O** at any time will snap you round and lock you onto the nearest foe. The figures on the bottom-right show the power in your weapons and the integrity of your armour. That's it. Now go blast some robots.



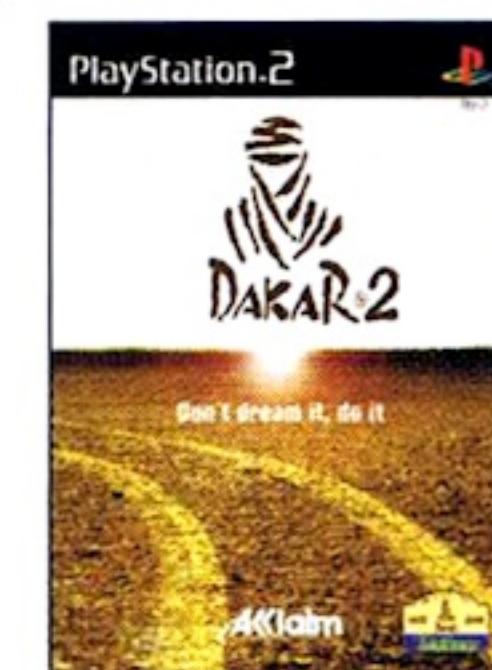
THE CONTROLS

L-stick	Movement
X	Jump
O	Shoot
A	Combat
B	Target
1	Sub shoot
2	Command
3	Jump + combat
4	Jump + shoot
START	Pause/Options

DAKAR 2



VAN MORRISON
The vehicles aren't exactly Lambos...



PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
GAME TYPE: RACING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1
(FULL GAME 1-2)

WE'VE GOT NOT ONE, but two tracks from the full game. The controls are simple but the handling of the heavyweight vehicles and the undulating terrain of the courses will be quite a revelation.

The two tracks on offer are very different. The first intersperses meandering rally-style dirt runs with viscously winding road sections, littered with car-sized rocks expertly placed to send your vehicle tumbling into the bush.

The second shows off *Dakar 2*'s unique open racing system, with no set course to follow, just an arrow on your GPRS indicator. Beware the rock-strewn paths. Some will afford a handy short-cut, others will wreck your car outright. Unfortunately, this demo times-out mid-race after about four minutes.



THE CONTROLS

L-stick	Steering
X	Accelerate
O	Brake/Reverse
A	Change camera
B	Handbrake
1	Repair/Recover
2	Look behind
START	Pause/Options



Keep hitting **O** to keep on target and switch to **A** 'combat' attacks when up close and personal.

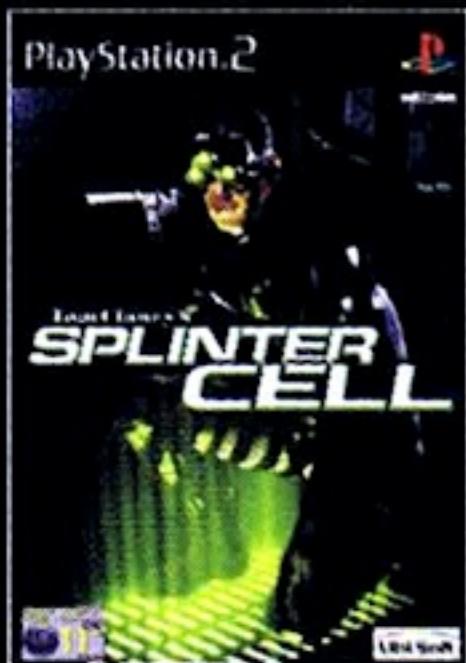


It's usually safe to cross the narrow rocky areas in the Sahara – your opponents won't dare, giving you a handy short cut.

ON THE DVD

ISSUE :: 014

Tom Clancy's SPLINTER CELL

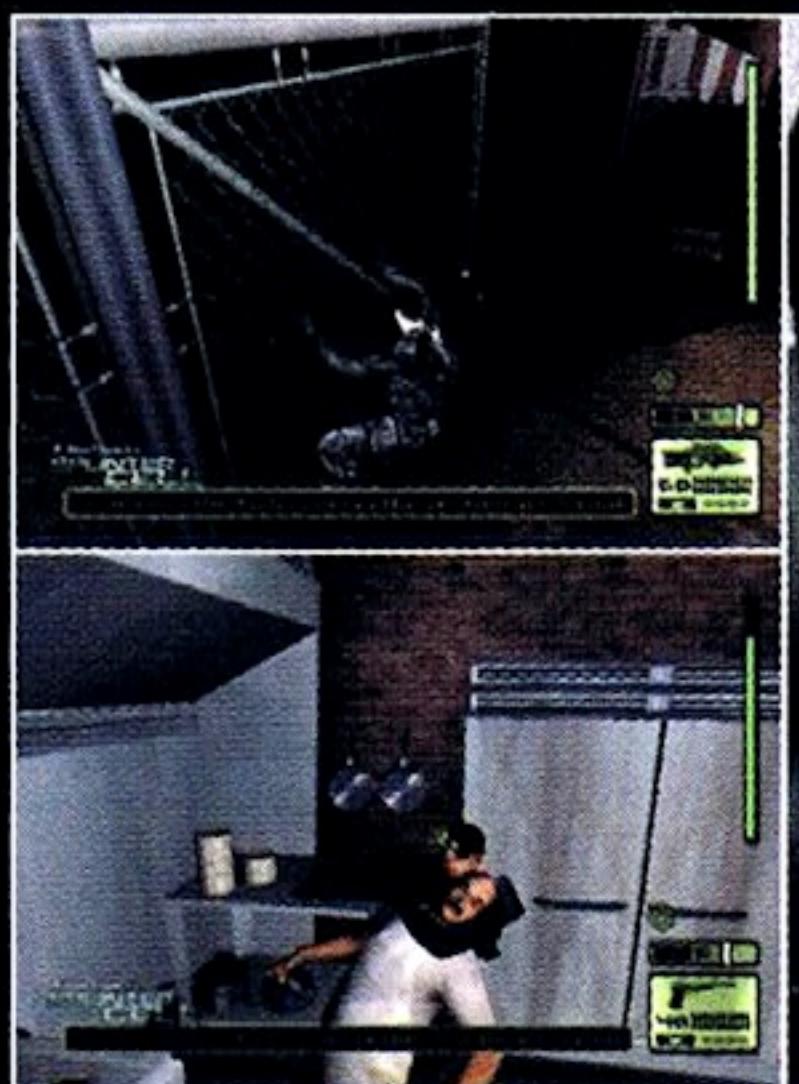


PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
GAME TYPE: ACTION/ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND. After we unleashed our exclusive playable demo of *Splinter Cell* last month, it only seemed fitting that we allow late-comers a second chance to play. So, here's that *Splinter Cell* demo one more time.

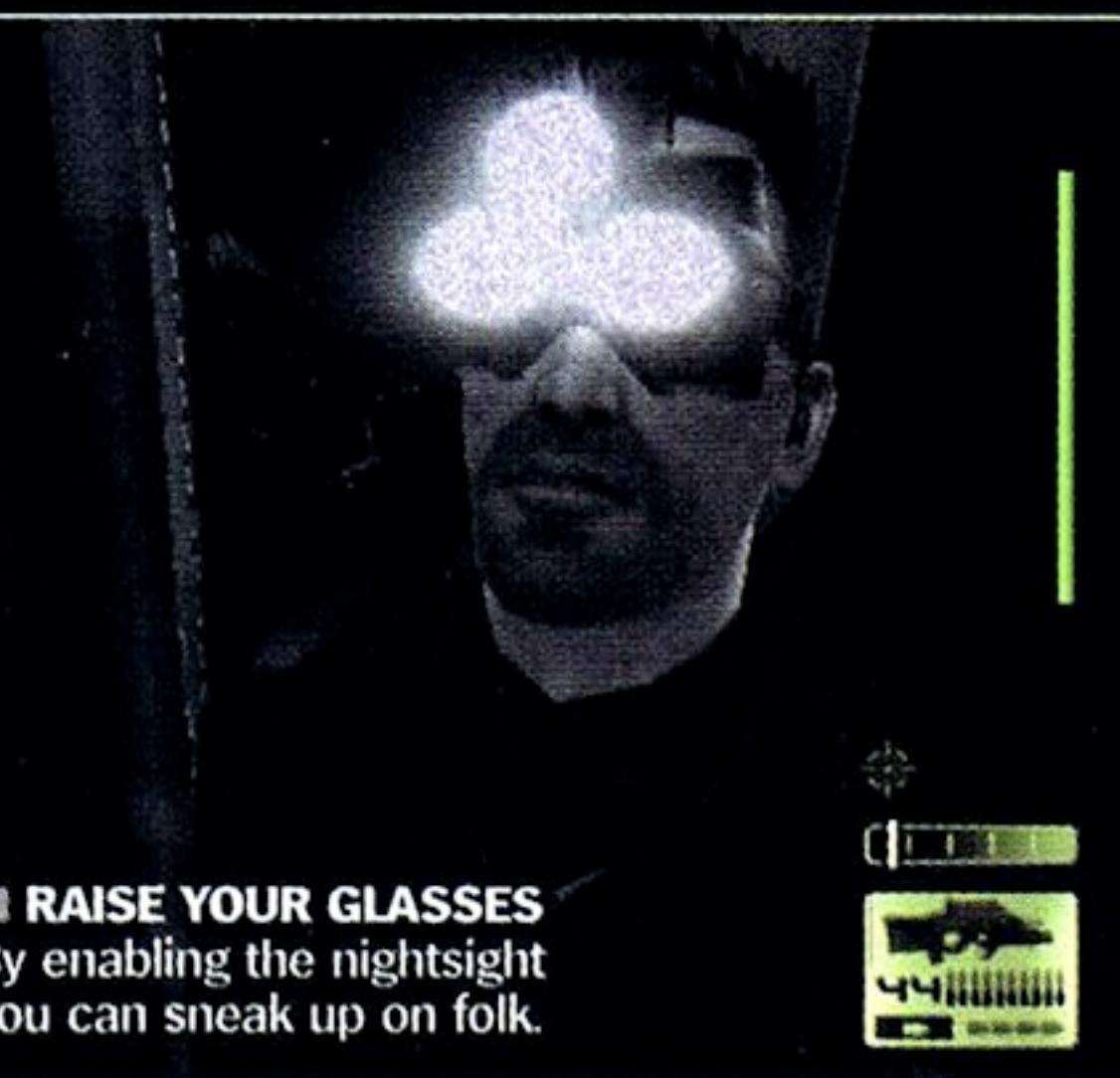
The relentless in-game texts and voice-overs will keep you on the right track, so feel free to explore and have fun with your bulging inventory of gadgets.

The context-sensitive Interact button will serve up options for you as you play, such as opening doors, knocking out guards and fiddling with stuff you find.



CHEF'S SPECIAL

That'll teach him for spitting in the soup.



RAISE YOUR GLASSES

By enabling the nightsight you can sneak up on folk.

THE CONTROLS

↑/↓	Inventory
←	Night vision
→	Thermal vision
L-stick	Movement
R-stick	Move camera
Ⓐ	Interact
Ⓑ	Quick inventory
△	Jump
□	Crouch
○	Secondary fire
■	Primary fire
□	Reload
□	Aim
L3	Back to the wall
R3	Sniper/Reset camera
START	Pause and inventory
SELECT	View controller



Rather than shooting the enemy, why not shoot out the lights? Then engage your night vision and do the dirty from the cover of darkness.



THE SCORPION KING™ RISE OF THE AKKADIAN

AT LAST, YOUR chance to actually 'be' The Rock. While a button to raise one eyebrow is not part of the control set-up there are plenty of other moves to keep you busy.

Your mission is simple: waste anyone foolish enough to stand between you and the arrow marking the entrance to the next fighting section. You begin weaponless (relying on hand-to-hand combat for your inaugural bout) but things soon develop, allowing you to mix up your attacks and wallop your opponents.

Watch out for the Special bar (blue, top-left) which shows the level of your special powers. Unleashed by pressing Ⓢ, these attacks are the most effective in setting your enemies on their asses.



PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
GAME TYPE: BEAT-'EM-UP
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

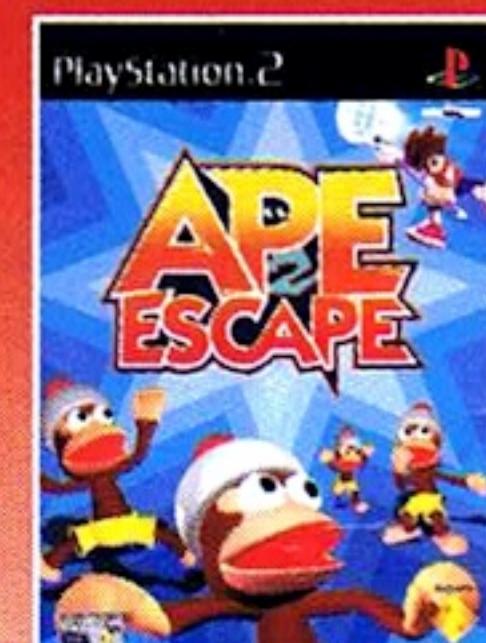
THE CONTROLS

L-stick	Movement
R-stick	Camera
←	One-handed sword
→	Two-handed sword
↑	Gauntlet
↓	Spear
Ⓐ	Weak attack
Ⓑ	Strong attack
△	Special attack
□	Jump
□	Block
□	Pause/Options
□	Quit



Keep your distance. Move in, attack, then reverse out of trouble. As soon as you stand still the ugly brothers will wade in and paste you.

APE ESCAPE 2



PUBLISHER: SONY
GAME TYPE: BEAT-'EM-UP
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1
(FULL GAME 1-2)

THE MUCH DELAYED platformer is finally being uncaged. It's amazing how pesky an ape becomes once you strap a flashing police light to its head...

First and foremost you must realise that Ⓢ, not Ⓣ, advances you through the menus. Choose New Game to get going. You'll be amazed at how lavish and excellent this demo is. Not only is there a full monkey-catching level (immediately ahead up the ramp) but around to the left or right you'll find a gadget training level (designed to ease you into the game's many bits 'n' pieces) and the awesome monkey football game we've been blabbing about for months. The best thing is simply to dive in and get involved. Have fun, bag those darned monkeys and then eat their brains!



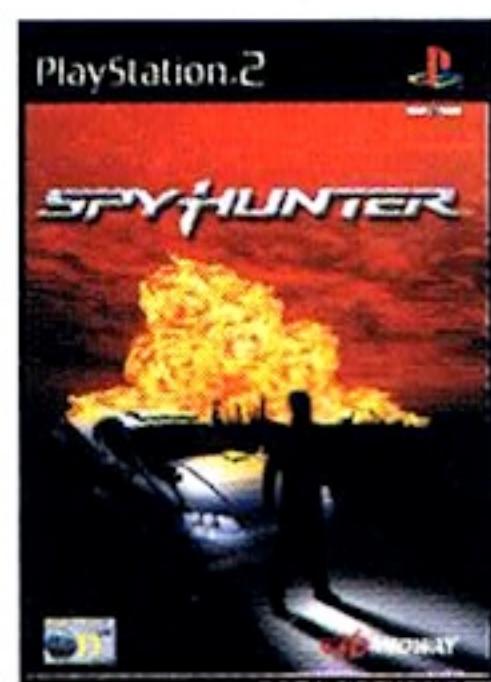
THE CONTROLS

L-stick	Movement
R-stick	Use
Ⓐ	Select item
Ⓑ	Select item
△	Select item
□	Reposition camera
□	Change view
□	Jump
□	Jump
□	Pause and options
□	Arrange items



The controls can take a bit of getting used to. The left stick controls movement and the right stick manipulates your current gadget selection.

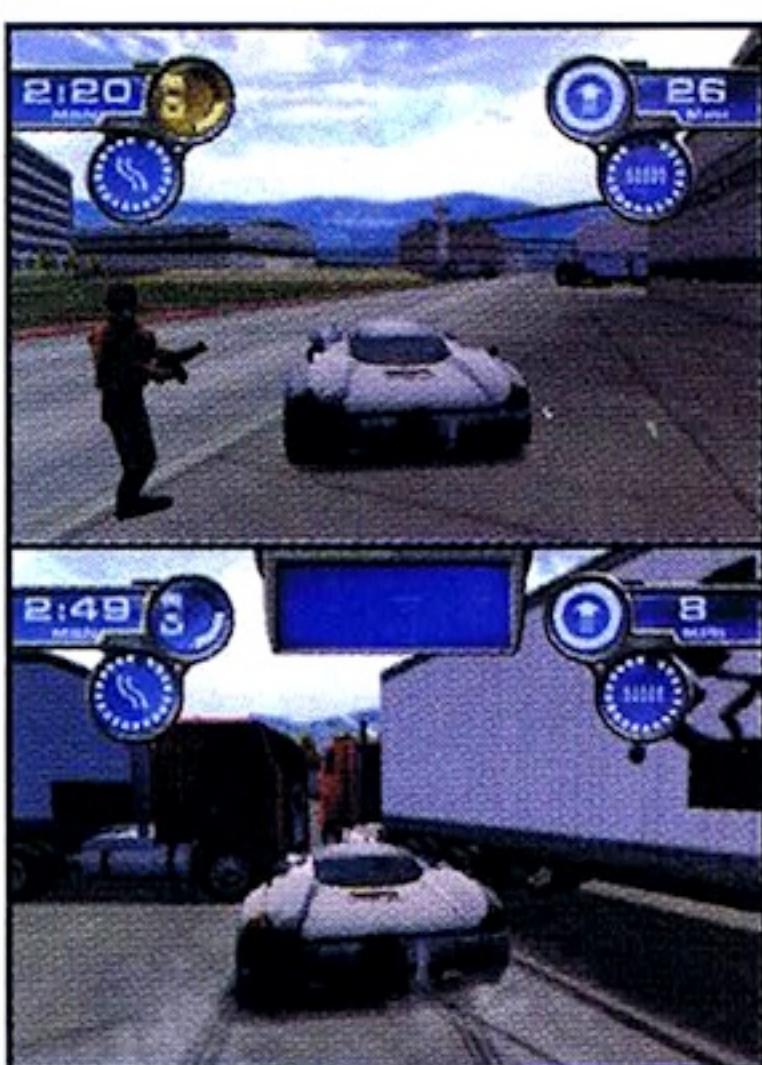
SPY HUNTER



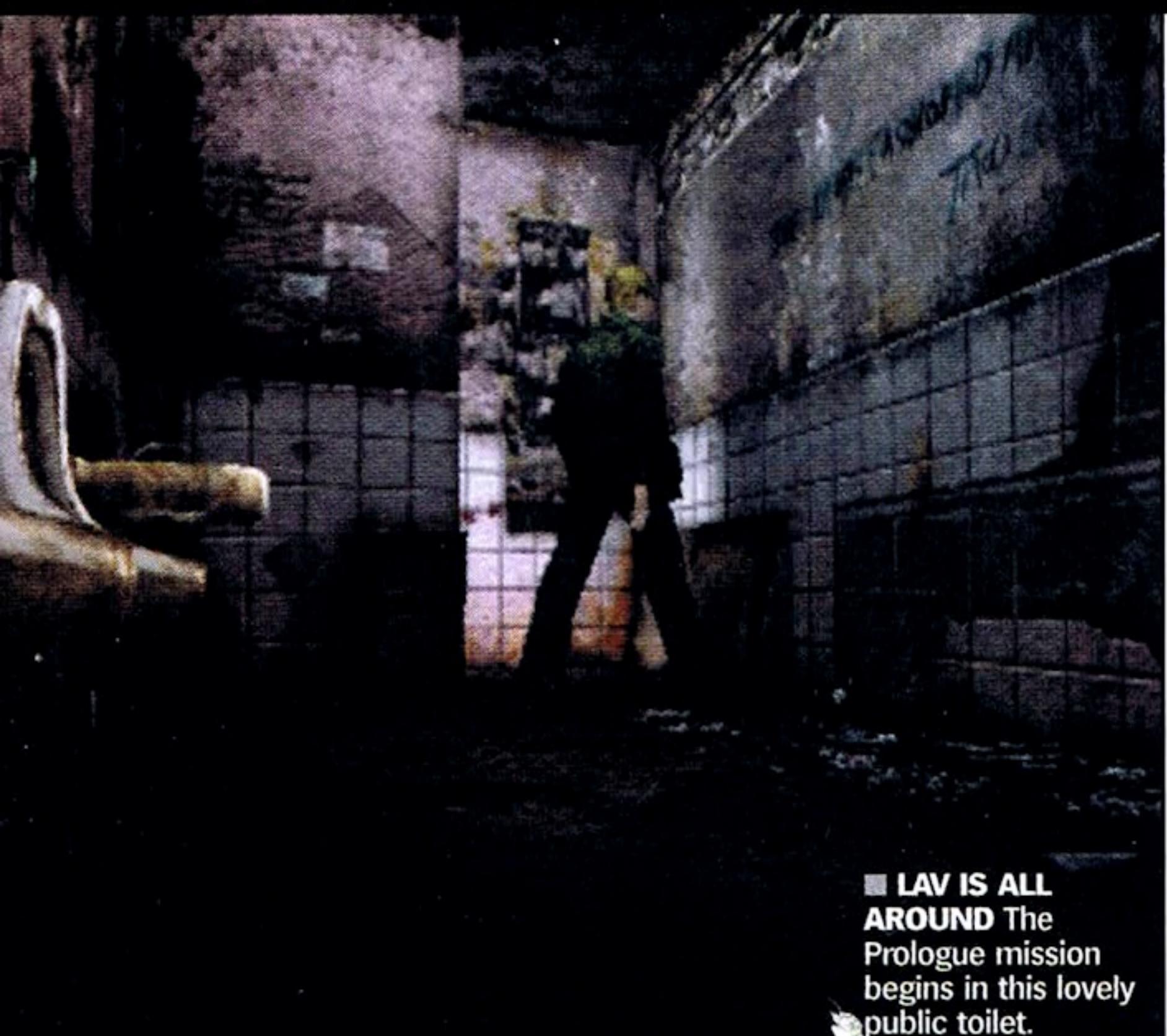
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
GAME TYPE: DRIVING
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1
(FULL GAME 1-2)

THE CONTROLS

L-stick Steer left/Right
X Accelerate (double tap for burnout)
O Fire homing beacons
Brake
A Rear-view scanner
Fire primary weapon
B Fire secondary weapon
C Cycle offensive weapons
D Cycle defensive weapons
Select Change view
Start Pause/Options



Having difficulty getting out of the car park? Have you tried driving over to the doors and shooting them out? Doh...



LAV IS ALL AROUND The Prologue mission begins in this lovely public toilet.

SILENT HILL 2



PUBLISHER: INFOGRAPHICS
GAME TYPE: ACTION ADVENTURE
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1

TO CELEBRATE THE upcoming release of *Silent Hill 3*, here's a demo that'll give a flavour of the thrills to come. After loading up you have the option of either Prologue or Battle Mode. If you choose Prologue, you'll begin James' adventure in some filthy public toilet on the other side of the lake from Silent Hill. Nice. After the intro sequence a timer appears in the top-right corner, so see if you can make it to the town before the demo times out.

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THE CONTROLS

L-stick Movement
X Action
O Turn flashlight on/off
Brake
A Run
B Map
C Strafe Right
D Strafe Left
Select Ready weapon
Start Centre view
Open inventory



CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS OF THE HOTTEST NEW PS2 RELEASES...



SHINOBI

We previously brought you a short teaser, but this in-game action bout reveals rather more of the *Shinobi*'s credentials. Still not satisfied? We'll be back next month with a playable demo, too.



DEF JAM VENDETTA

Join Method Man, Ghostface Killah, Scarface, Capone, WC, Ludacris and the rest of the gang for an evening of violence and injury! While they may have a lot of love for the streets, *Def Jam*'s artistes clearly don't have a lot of love for each other.



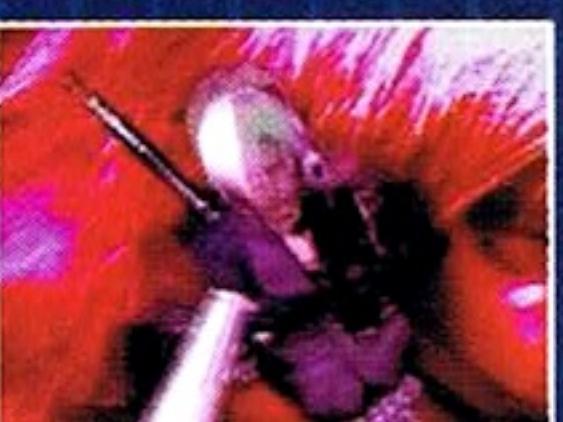
GT CONCEPT 2002: TOKYO-GENEVA

The *Gran Turismo 3* devotee's extension gets a price drop as part of Sony's burgeoning \$49.95 Platinum stable. And to celebrate, here are the game's concept cars in action.



SECRETS OF WAR OF THE MONSTERS

Go behind the scenes of the ludicrous creature-feature stomp-'em-up.



DEVIL MAY CRY 2

It's almost upon us. In the meantime here's the latest in Capcom's relentless series of impressive *DMC2* trailers.



BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON

The formerly flat 2D adventure games (that sold a million between them) now pop into glorious 3D in a game that looks like it could give *Tomb Raider* a run for its money in the action adventure exploration stakes.



WORLD CHAMPIONS HIP SNOOKER 2003

Getting a full-size snooker table into your bedsit can be a bit of a bind. Fortunately your PS2 can help, allowing you to play snooker against a cast of real-life 'athletes' thanks to Codemasters' latest.



ZONE OF THE ENDERS



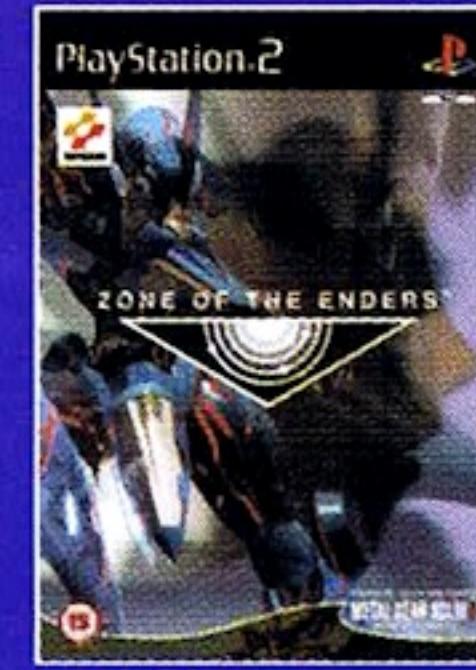
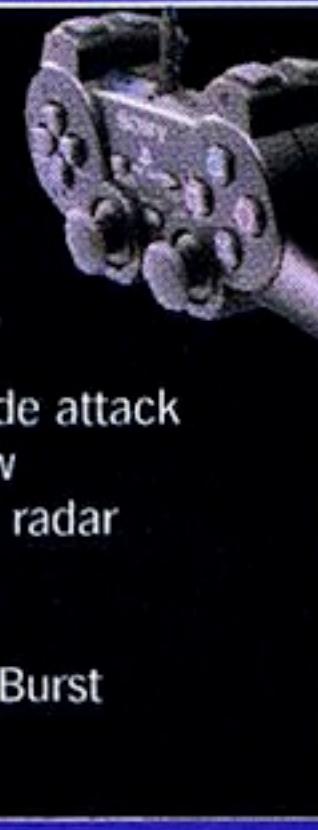
WITH ZOE2 DUE IN a couple of months we thought that it would be a good time to revisit the first ZOE. It's a game of robot combat, set against a backdrop of intergalactic civil war.

Press **START** to skip the videos and use **○** to make your menu selections. After a short intro there's a Training mode, then you're off to fulfil two objectives. Firstly you must clear the area of enemy mechs and encounter main bad lady Viola. Don't forget to pick up any goodies left behind after battles.

Finally a full boss battle with the squid-like Tempest awaits. And when you're all done why not try again at an increased difficulty level.

THE CONTROLS

D-pad Selects sub-weapon
L-Stick Movement
R-Stick Move camera
A Ascend
X Descend
B Basic attacks/Shots/Blade attack
C Sub-weapon/Grab/Throw
D Cancels lock-on/Shrinks radar
E Lock-on/Change lock-on
F Block
G Dash during movement/Burst
H Pause and options



PUBLISHER: INFOGRAPHICS
GAME TYPE: MECH
ACTION
OUT: NOW
PLAYERS: 1



When fighting Tempest, power up a Burst attack and hang on to it. Wait for when he flies into the air, misses you and lands. Then let him have it. In the head.



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TAK-ING CONTROL OF GAMING

OPS2 goes behind the scenes of *Tak and the Power of Juju* and finds a new hero with enough magic to cast a spell on gamers!

PLATFORM GAMES ARE cool again.

With the likes of *Jak and Daxter*, *Ratchet & Clank*, *Sly Raccoon* and *Ape Escape 2*, PS2 owners are almost spoiled for choice.

Why are platformers so popular? "Because it is easy to identify with the characters in these games," said Avalanche Software president John Blackburn. "It feels great to become a loveable and heroic character and save the world."

Avalanche has wanted to make *Tak and the Power of Juju* for a long time. "We actually came up with the idea about seven years ago," Blackburn recalls. "We knew we wanted a game based on voodoo magic, so we had all of the artists draw some sample characters. One of the artists made a little comic strip that he titled 'Witch Doctor Tryouts'. When anyone saw the sketch, they were always drawn to the character that eventually evolved into Tak."

Blackburn describes Tak as "an action adventure that takes place in a land where magic works. The game is based around action, puzzles, and a big dose of humour. It's an action adventure game, but it probably causes the player to think more than the average games you see now. It's 50 per cent action, 50 per cent puzzles."

Much of the game's appeal will come from the magic. "Juju magic comes out of voodoo," explains Blackburn. "We really like the word Juju and also the concept of voodoo. It's mysterious and cool and very different to what most of us know in our everyday lives."

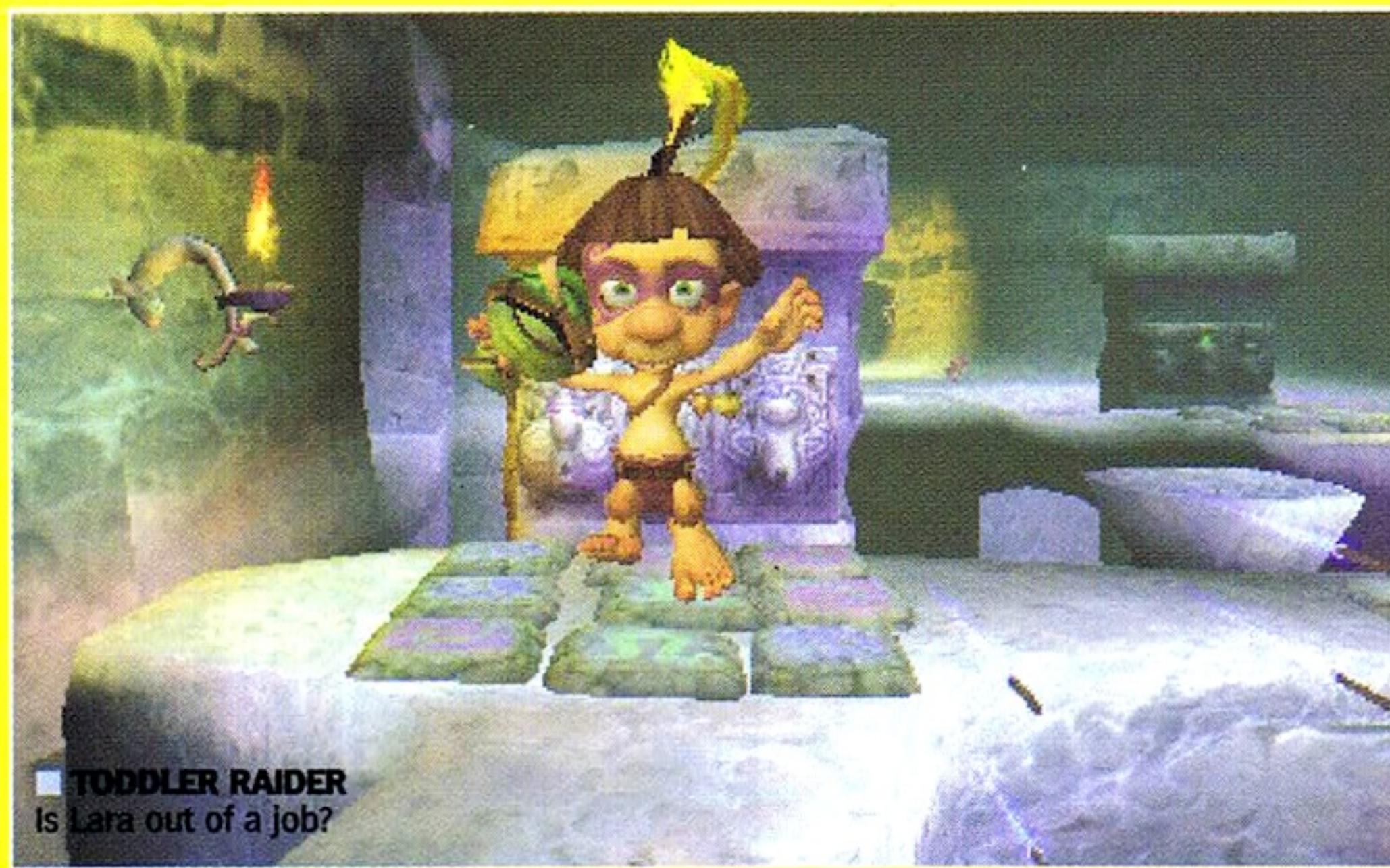
Tak is an apprentice to the village shaman and an unlikely hero. "His village worships a Goddess called the Moon Juju," says Blackburn. "But a villain has stolen some moonstones that the Moon Juju gave to the village and has

turned all the villagers into sheep. Tak inadvertently escaped this fate and is one of the few people around to actually help the village."

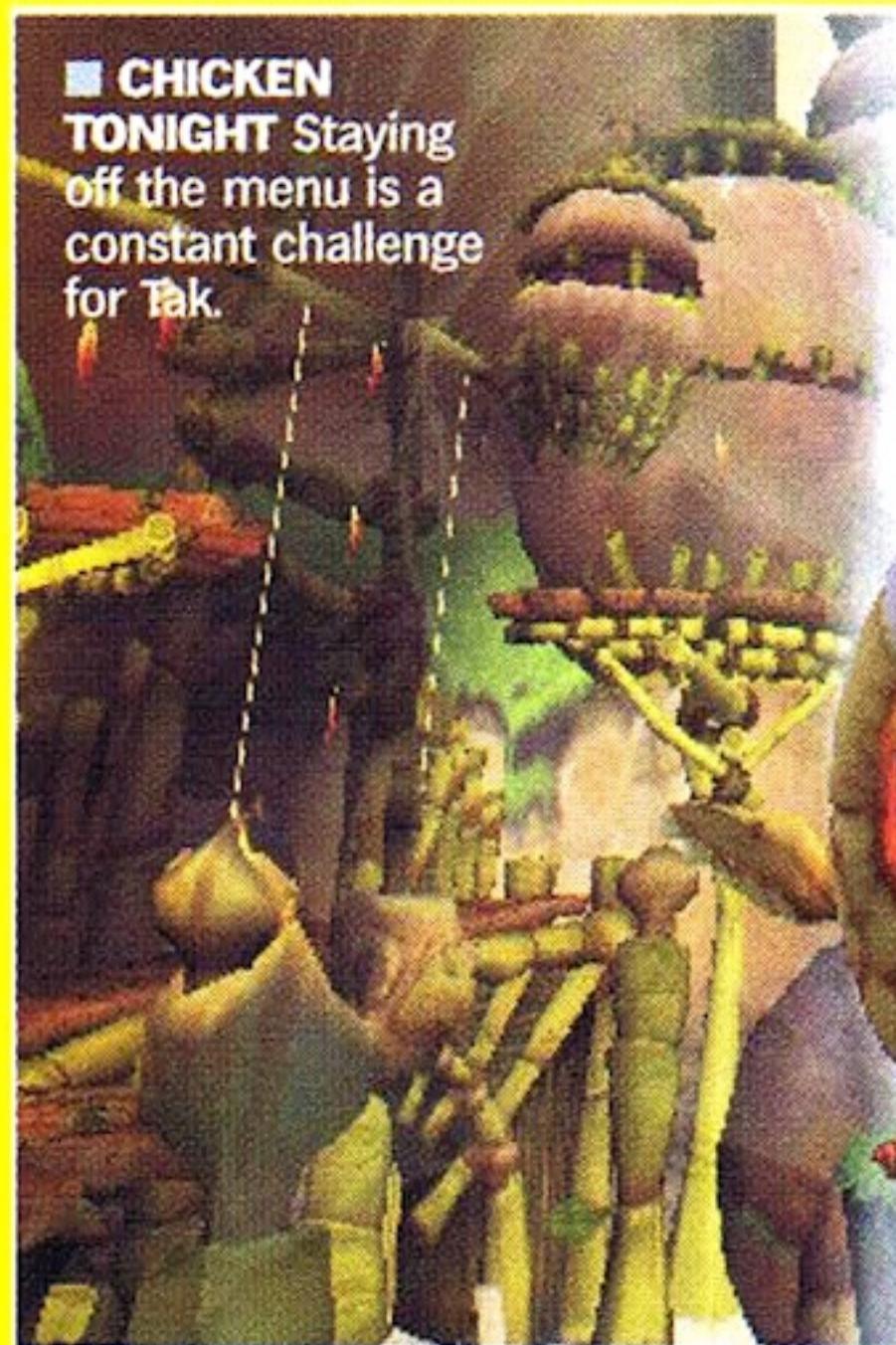
Tak begins the game without any weapons. Later he gets the spirit rattle, which is "not only his weapon but also his conduit into magic." Tak can upgrade his rattle by appeasing the Juju Gods. "As the enemies get stronger in the game, Tak will acquire more powerful Juju. Some of the most powerful Juju in the game actually transforms Tak into different animals."

One criticism of the platforming genre is that innovation is often rare. Blackburn says Avalanche deliberately tried to steer away from the contrived play mechanics seen in dozens of titles before it. "In one particularly heated argument between me and one of the designers on the game, he said 'I would rather use anything in this game than a catapult. It just seems so contrived to have a catapult sitting in the middle of the level. Why couldn't we do something cool like put an orangutan next to a palm tree, pulling it down to eat bananas and flinging you with it, and it's more an element of discovery as opposed to knowing you must use something because it's there?' The idea hit us like lightning. We could create a world that was more immersive and use the animals and their behaviour as the gameplay mechanics."

The orangutan made it into the game, and is just one of the many neat touches. "As we started to explore this concept, we really felt like we had found the game's identity," adds Blackburn. "We could use all the animals, and the animal's interactions with each other and with Tak, to make an interesting and unique puzzle system that should be immersive for the player."



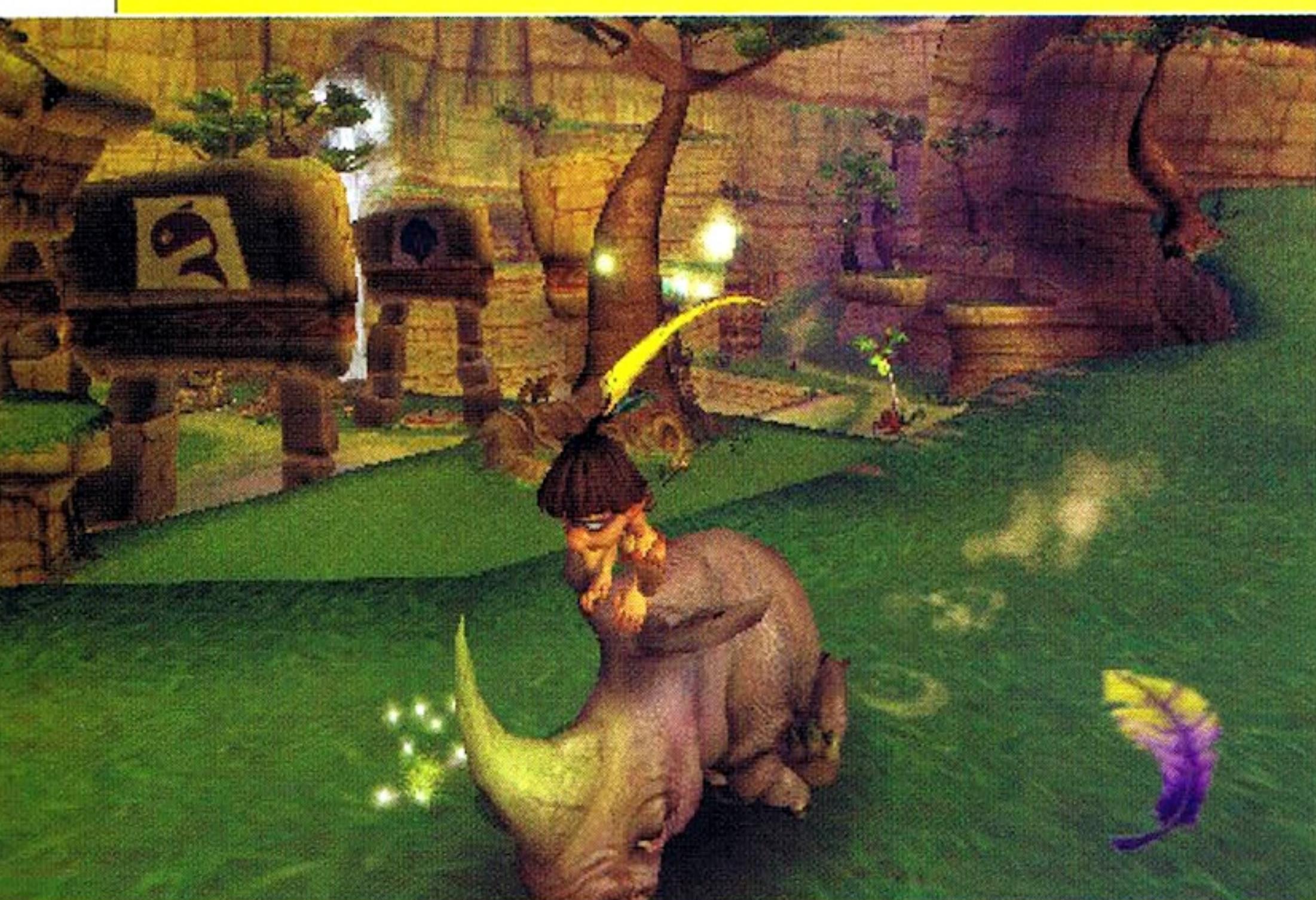
■ TODDLER RAIDER
Is Lara out of a job?



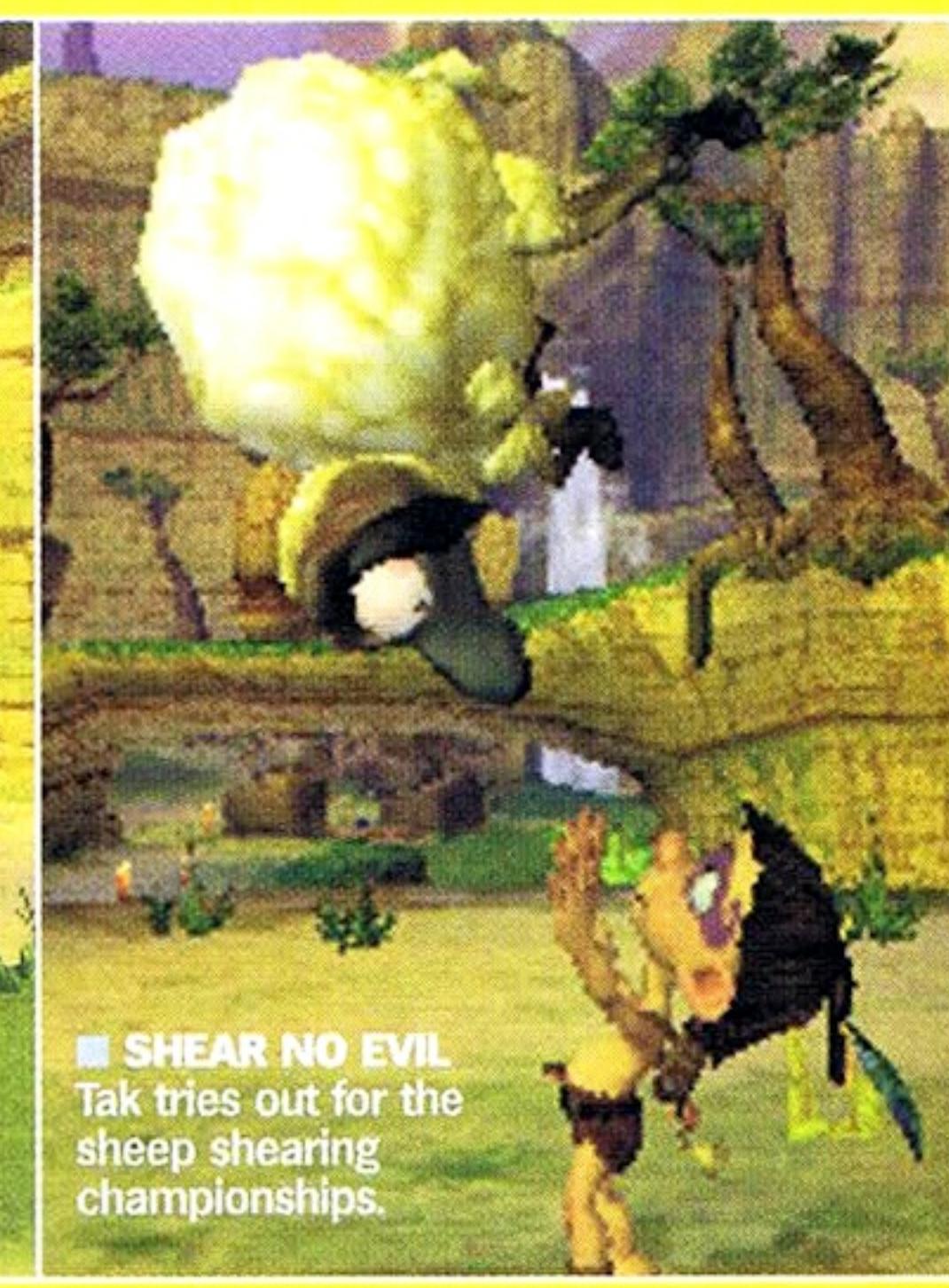
■ CHICKEN TONIGHT
Staying off the menu is a constant challenge for Tak.



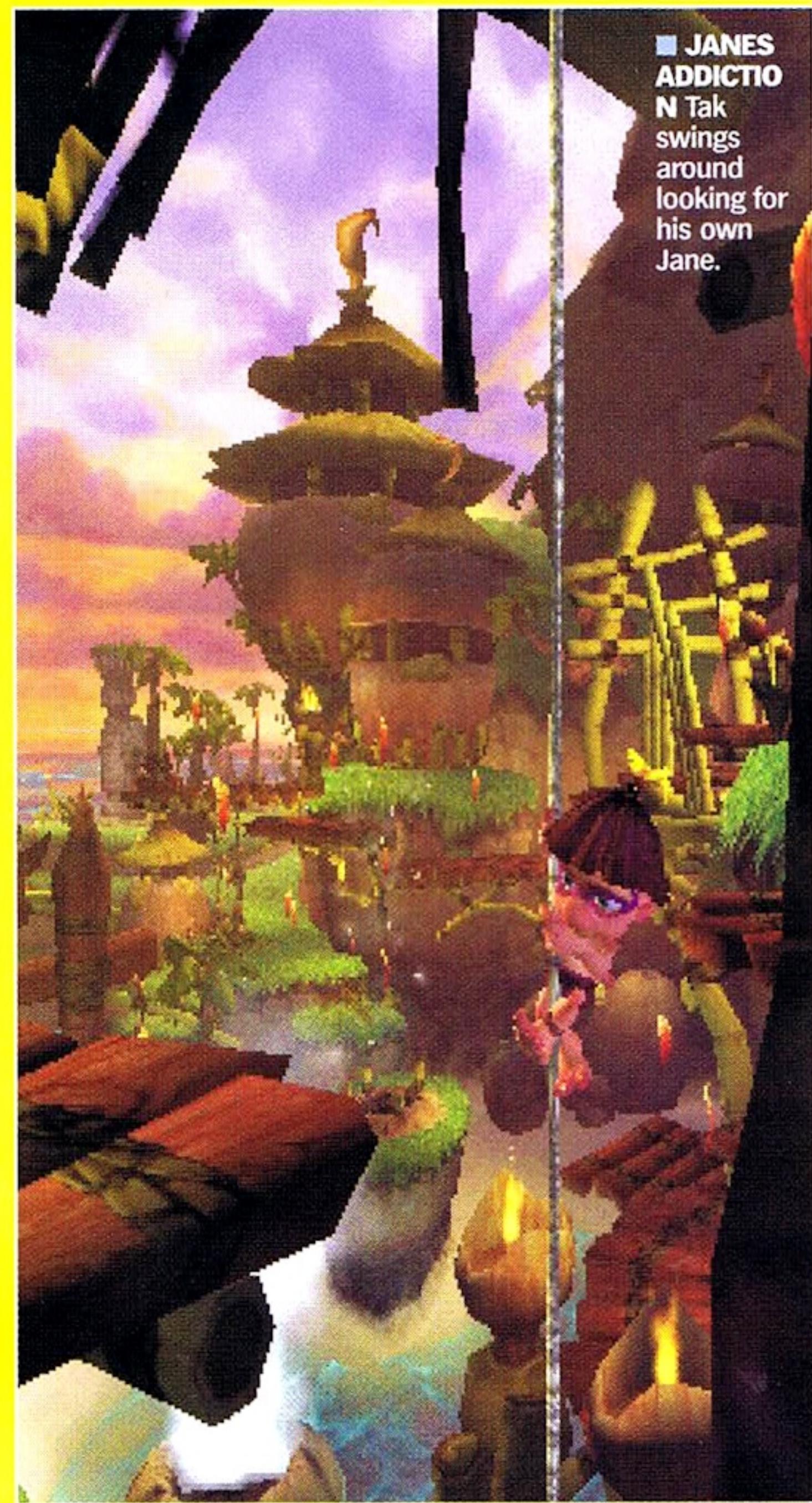
■ CHILD PRODIGY
Tak is the saviour of his village.



■ SWINGERS Use the orangutan to fling you to new levels.



■ SHEAR NO EVIL
Tak tries out for the sheep shearing championships.



■ JANE'S ADDICTION
Tak swings around looking for his own Jane.

"We really think that players will love exploring the worlds and discovering the different animals within. We have put a great deal of energy into making the animals in the game have a lot of interactivity and humorous personality. We are really proud of the animals and the animation. We were hoping to make them really seem alive and have personality. We've added facial expressions and lots of humour. Based on the feedback that we are getting, we think that we have achieved our goal."

One of the game's highlights is that Tak can ride a rhino and an emu. "They both feel very different and have different purposes in the game," says Blackburn. For example, the rhino can be used to bash through a stone wall in the first level, while the emu is speedy. "There are also a couple of other vehicles and animals that he can ride, but these are in some of the boss rounds."

OPS2 has enjoyed several levels from the game, including the fabulous Chicken Island. The level sees Tak don an amusing chicken suit. Not only does it look hilarious, but it also lets our hero glide. "He can also use these air vents to go and fly around. But if he touches water, the suit will disintegrate and

he'll go back to being a normal guy." Tak can also lay explosive eggs and hurl them at opponents, or use them to bomb villains from a great height.

An example of a smart puzzle early in the game appears when a belligerent ram blocks your way. Shooting him only makes the ram more annoyed. The solution is to shoot a nearby monkey, who then gets angry and hurls a coconut, which hits the ram. The ram then angrily attempts to head butt the tree and gets knocked out, leaving Tak to casually wander past.

Lush jungle levels that we played saw Tak wielding a pole vault to reach high platforms, use a rope to swing Tarzan-style between gaping chasms, and shoot a blowpipe to combat opponents and solve puzzles. He also makes good use of his rattle to wallop nasties. The immersive environments feature real-world physics like ripples in water and realistic rope swinging. The detailed worlds are impressively big, bright, colourful and appealing, with excellent real-time lighting effects and shadows.

OPS2 also played an entertaining tomb level which featured the usual switches, pressure pads, darts and traps to avoid. But the twist is that there's also a mummy that must be rescued by guiding him through the

lava-filled rooms. Amusingly, it doesn't matter if the mummy gets hurt (he's already dead), so you can guide the hapless creature into all manner of perils and giggle at the comical results, such as the creature desperately trying to put out his fraying bandages as they catch fire.

Tak should certainly provide plenty of laughs as you play. "We don't take Tak very seriously," says Blackburn. "He's not the kind of guy that wants to be cool. He's not Jak from *Jak and Daxter*, he's much more an everyday Joe. We really want people to feel like they can identify with him throughout the course of the game."

Avalanche is currently fine-tuning the levels in anticipation of a pre-Christmas release. "We have been working on it full-time for the last 14 months," explains Blackburn. "In the beginning we had about 20-25 people on the game, but in these final months the team size has doubled."

If the game is successful, publisher THQ has an agreement with kids channel Nickelodeon and movie giant Viacom to develop TV and big-screen animated features. It's a reversal of THQ's previous reliance on Nickelodeon properties. Watch out Spongebob and Rugrats – a funny looking kid with a rattle is about to stick voodoo pins into you... □ JH

THE GRUMPY GREEN GIANT

OPS2 feels the rage rising in Vivendi's smashing new game, *The Hulk*.

SUPERHEROES HAVE BEEN

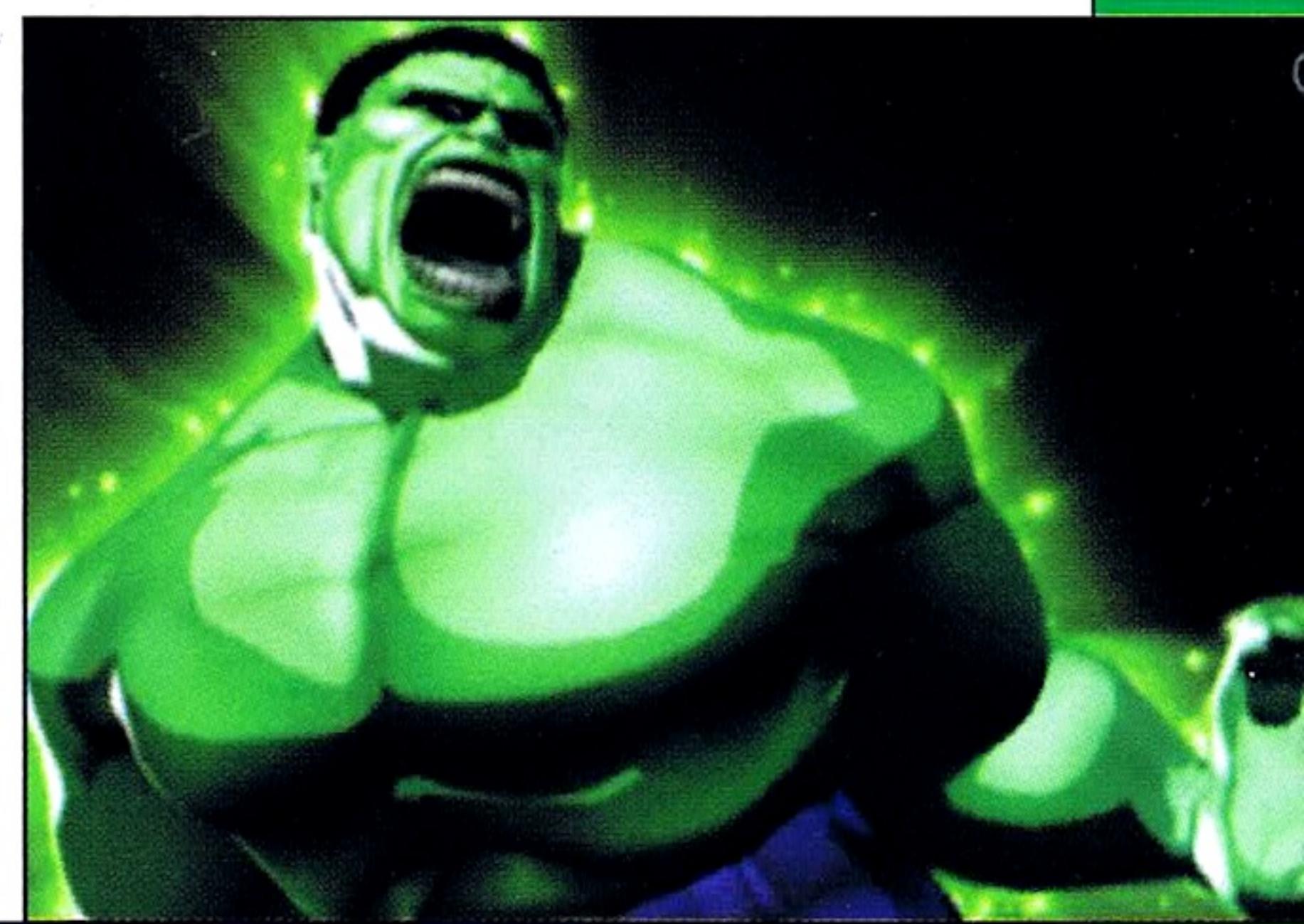
enjoying something of a renaissance on PS2. Lifted from their 2D comic origins and moulded into 3D playable characters, fans can now actually be their favourite character. Great while you're a superhero, not so great while in the shoes of their socially inadequate alter-egos. And none is more of a misfit than troubled scientist Bruce Banner – proud owner of seven identical purple suits. What a loser.

Although, he does turn into the Hulk when he gets in a tizz, and it's

this physical metamorphosis that Radical has taken to form the base of this 30-level action game. You either take the stealthy, brainy option and play as Banner or you unleash the strength and rage of the emerald Hulk. After seeing the trailer for the Ang Lee-directed film (out in June) we think the Hulk's intense rage and superhuman powers are preferable. That bit when he spins a tank around his head and throws it off into the distance – now there's something we'd like to try.

With over 25 unique Hulk

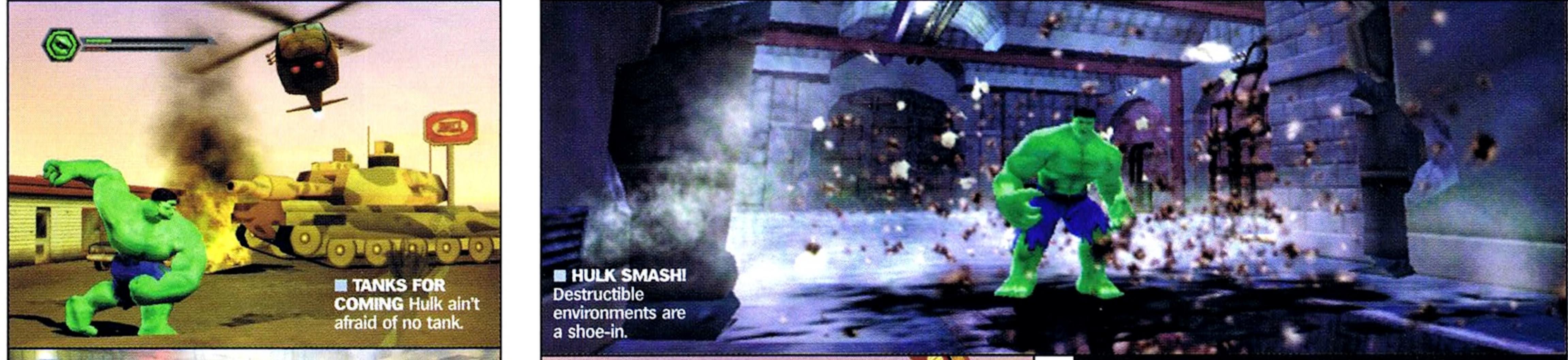
attacks we'd guess the tank lob is in there somewhere. As this is a Universal-produced game we get voice-overs from the film cast (including Eric Bana as Bruce Banner) and levels that are set in the movie's locations. And don't forget sultry brunette and Banner love interest Betty Ross, played by the rather gorgeous Jennifer Connelly. With Ang Lee at the helm, *Hulk* is a likely blockbuster, with the game destined to follow. Not bad for a genetic mutant with anger management issues. □ GW



TANKS FOR COMING Hulk ain't afraid of no tank.



JOG HIS MEMORY Hulk's questioning skills are second-to-none.



HULK SMASH! Destructible environments are a shoe-in.



NO MORE SIGNS! Hulk has a very strict no-advertising policy.



THE NEGOTIATOR Punch first, ask questions later.

HULK GOES BANA-NAS

After successful comic-to-movies like *Spider-Man*, *Batman*, *Superman*, *X-Men* and *Daredevil*, a film about the not-so-jolly green giant was bound to come along. Good old Aussie legend Eric Bana is the man with all the anger issues. Little has been seen so far of the mysterious movie but with a computer generated *Hulk* going on regular rampages, it's guaranteed to be action-packed.



TEKKEN ON THE WORLD

Alex Malano, Australia's reigning Tekken 4 champion unleashes the beast in London.

LONDON'S CAMDEN Roundhouse recently played host to the Tekken 4 International Finals, with Australia's own champion of champions being pitted in battle against the world's best. Melbourne's Alex Malano, discovered through this very magazine, was unfortunately beaten in an intensely competitive field of 20.

Flown across the world for the mammoth 24 hour journey, with his brother Diego, by Sony Computer Entertainment Australia; Alex (using boxer Steve Fox) was unlucky to be beaten in the quarter finals by one of the favourites – Denmark's Henrik Hejlesen (also using Fox) – in a supremely tight 5-4 loss. The massive crowd highlighted it as one of the Tournament's best.

Alex had already breezed through the initial Group Stage of the tournament, being beaten only once, but dispatching opponents from Spain, Ireland and Holland. "I should've beaten Henrik. I wasn't playing smart. I tried to get

him on the same moves over and over. He did deserve it in the end, and it's too late to ponder now anyway!" reflected Alex.

A severe dose of jetlag put Alex in an unfortunate position – something none of the European opponents had to contend with. Alex was gracious however, and was a true gentlemen in defeat. For the record though, the *Sore Loser* of the Tournament award easily went to England's Michael O'Hara (Jin Kazama). Whingeing Poms – they can't win anything!

Alex's advice to *Tekken 4* champion-wannabes is simple. "First thing is to choose a powerful character. Learn their best moves, not the most spectacular. Practise the combos more than anything else. And that means practise, practise, practise!" Other popular characters included Paul Phoenix, Jin Kazama, Law and Julia Chang.

The eventual winner was Noam Gat (Christie Montiero), a known *Tekken 4* legend and teenager

hailing from Israel. Noam took home 5,000 Euros in cash, a one-off *Tekken 4* arcade machine and, of course, the coveted trophy. His acceptance speech concluded "I know what I'm doing but when I don't, I'm even more dangerous!"

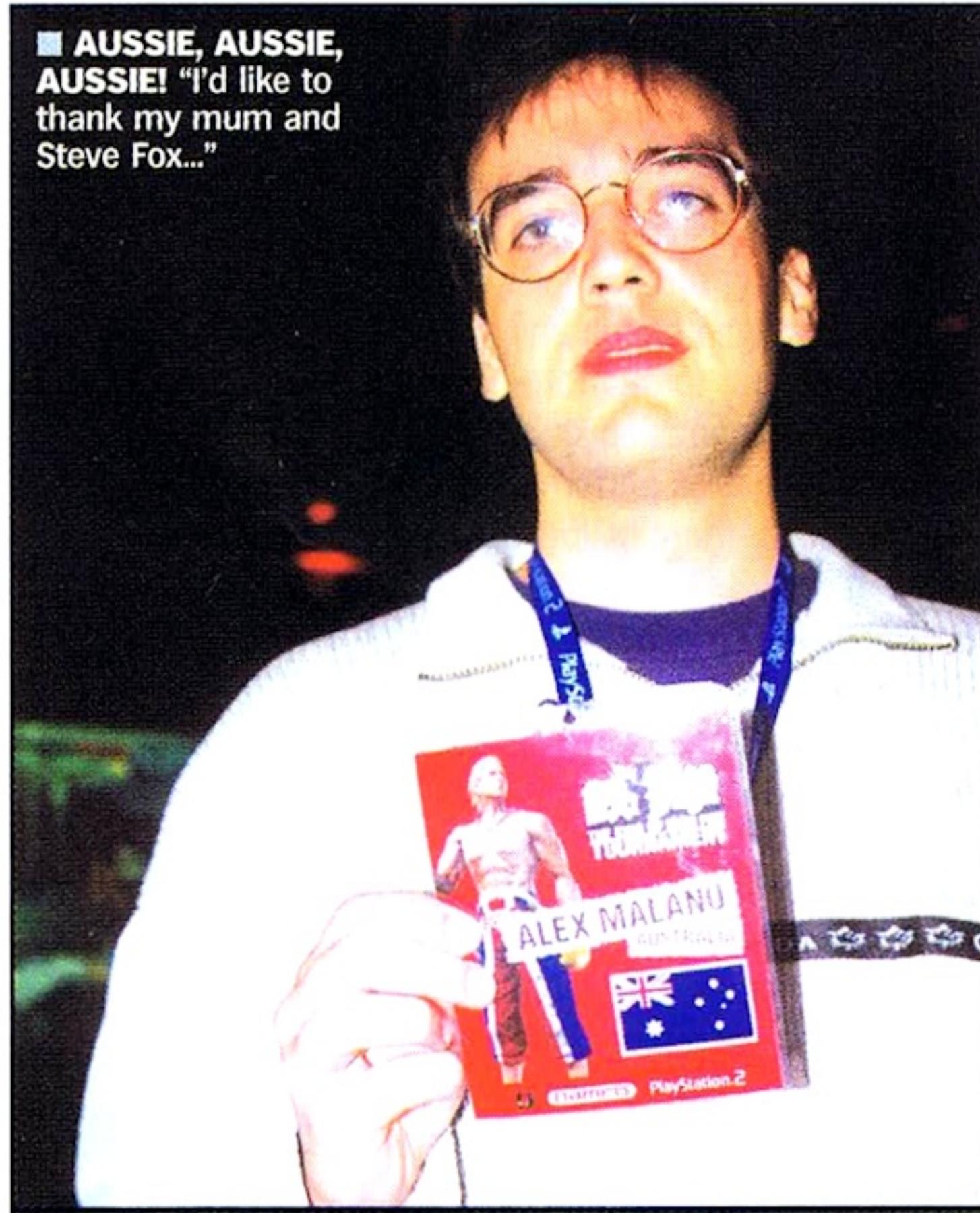
Could our Alex have taken out the champ? "Maybe. I might have been able to beat him but Steve Vs. Christie matches are always tough. I've had quite a lot of fights against Eddie though, who is very similar. Noam was a worthy Champion."

Amongst many highlights, those lucky enough to be in attendance were witness to special guest appearances from *Tekken 4*'s Namco producers. Noam actually did fight with them and pummelled his opponents easily. Their excuse? "The longer you work at Namco on the *Tekken* games, the worse you get at them..."

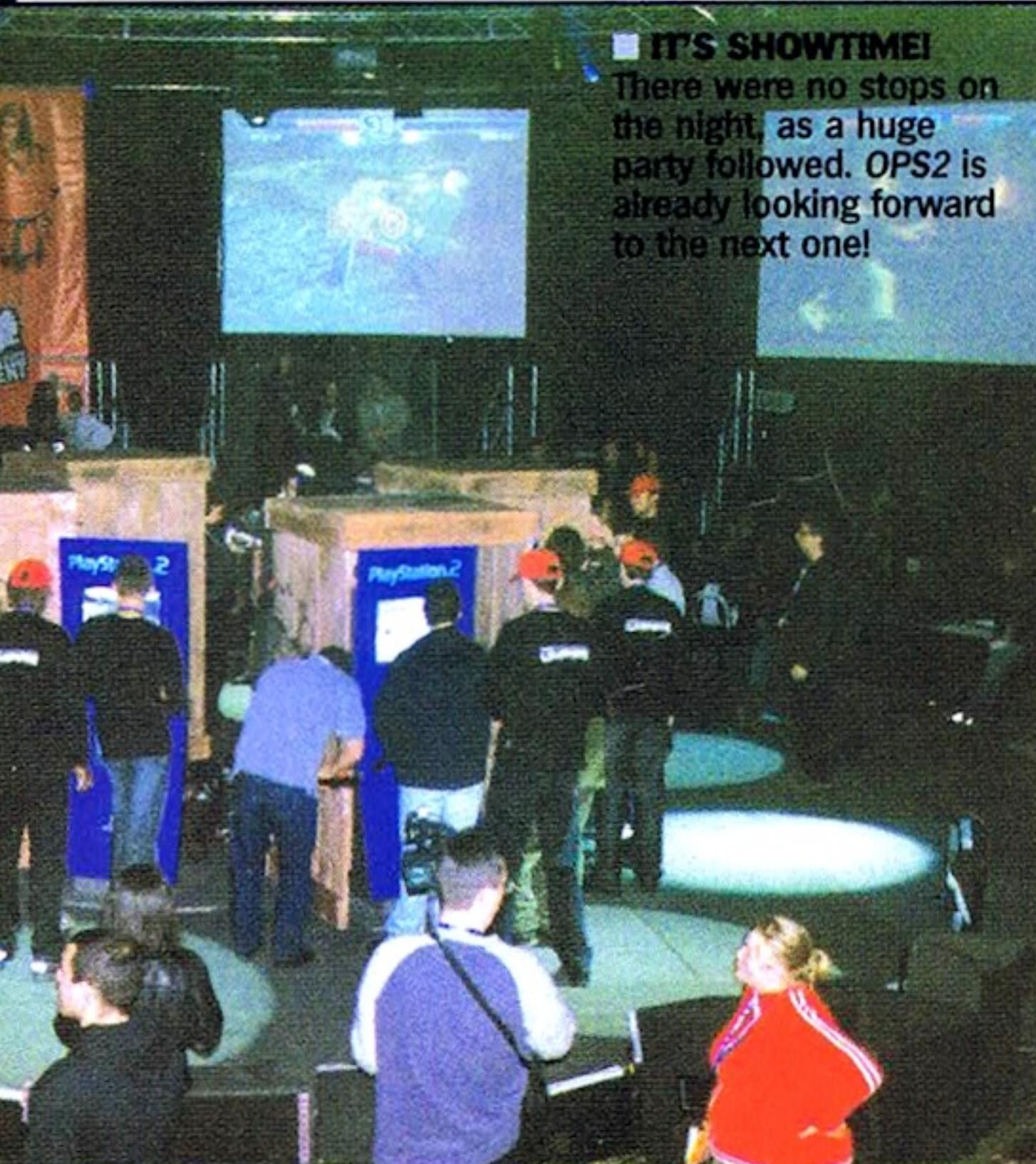
Who said you never get anywhere playing videogames? □ RY

A video of the *Tekken 4* International Finals will feature soon on OPS2's exclusive demo disc.

AUSSIE, AUSSIE, AUSSIE! "I'd like to thank my mum and Steve Fox..."



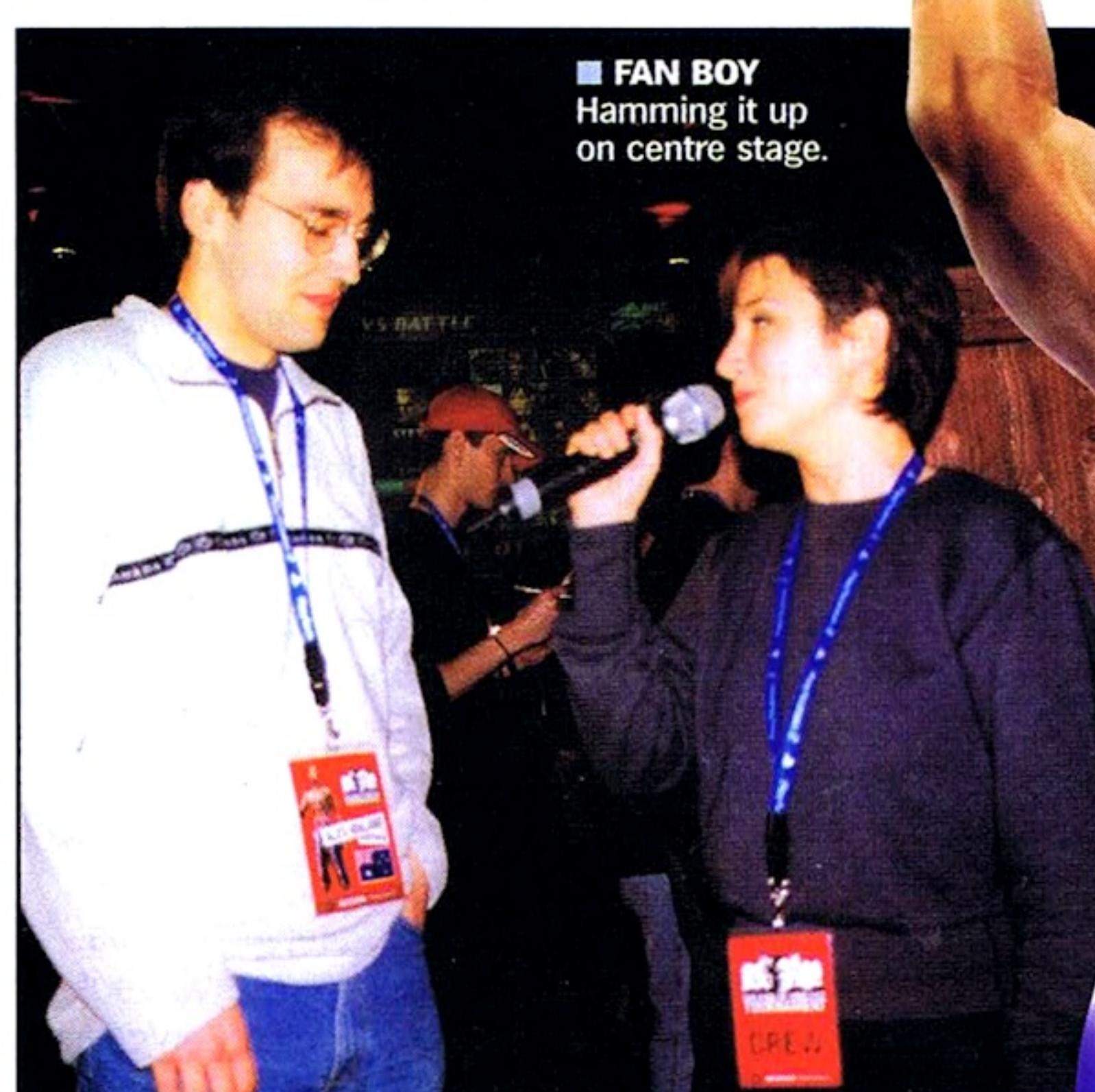
HEATED Competitors started taking things a little too seriously!



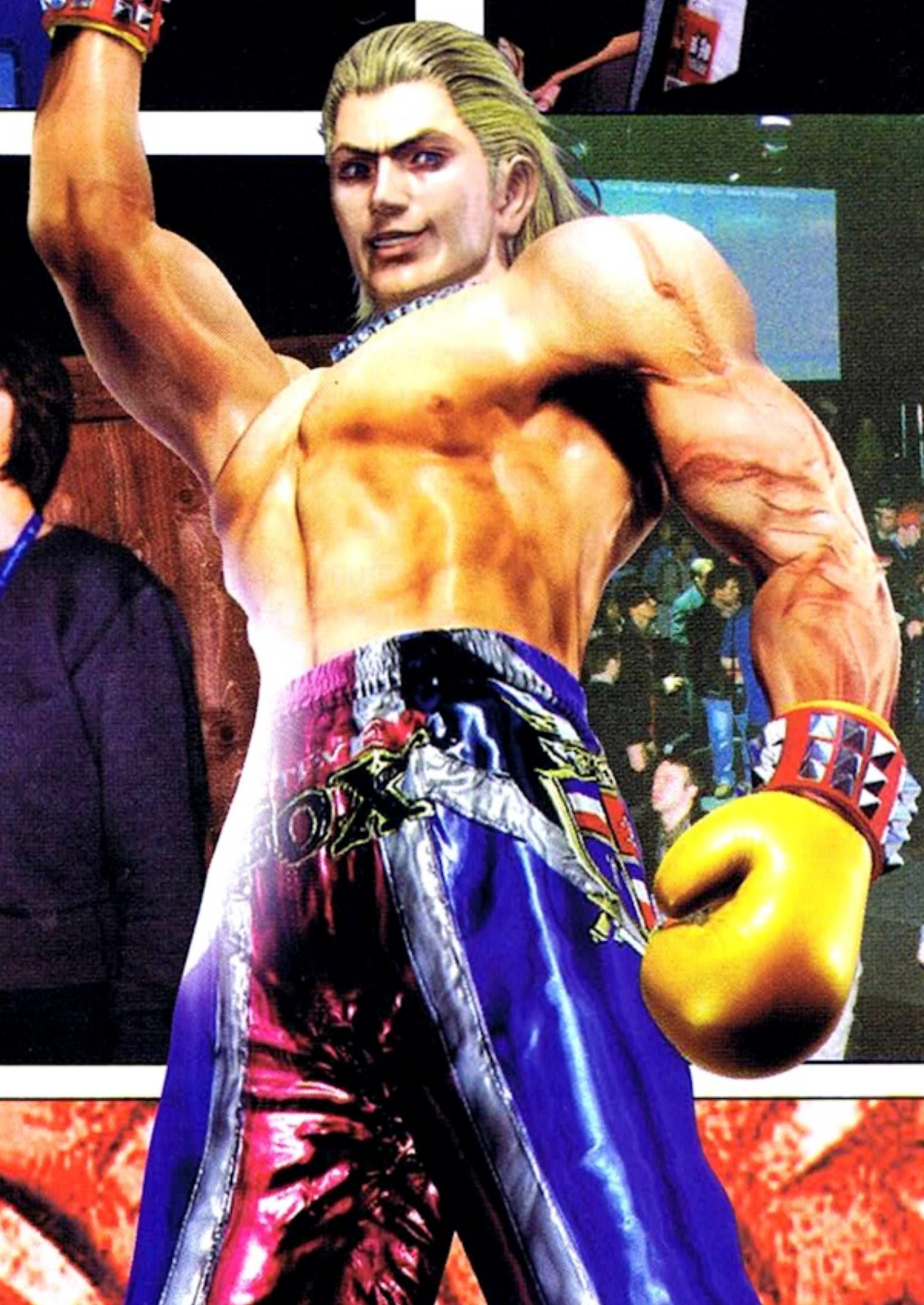
IT'S SHOWTIME! There were no stops on the night, as a huge party followed. OPS2 is already looking forward to the next one!



LOOOOSER! Alex squares up against the UK's sore loser...



FAN BOY Hamming it up on centre stage.



GAME, SWEAT AND MATCH

OPS2 has a fleeting romance with Acclaim's Beach Volleyball.

SIT BACK AND CLOSE your eyes. Can you feel the sunshine? Hear the surf gently breaking on the white sand? Look further down the beach and you can just make them out through the heat haze – statuesque blondes spiking and setting, bronzed brunettes performing last-ditch blocks, barely-there bikinis and cheese-cutter thongs as far as the eye can see. Paradise, basically, providing you can ignore all the keg-chugging frat boys...

Both published and developed by Acclaim, *Beach Volleyball* is due for release exclusively on PlayStation 2 this summer (when else?) and features Arcade, Exhibition and Tournament modes as well as a raft of mini-games. The game is set during Spring Break (an American student vacation best described as a sun-kissed version of Sodom and Gomorrah).

We've also learned that the game will feature a proprietary texturing technique that lets the girls work up a rosy-cheeked sheen of sweat during matches. It's crystal clear how Acclaim will be attempting to position the title – the instant playability of Sega's *Beach Spikers* mixed with the soft-focus sauce of Tecmo's *Dead Or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball*. Man, we need a holiday. Or at least a very cold shower. □ TC

LIFE'S A BEACH
BARELY-THERE BIKINIS
AND CHEESE-CUTTER
THONGS AS FAR AS
THE EYE CAN SEE



TOUCH OF GLASS

Hack 'n' slash of a different kind in Capcom's *Glass Rose*.

GLASS ROSE MIGHT SOUND like a rejected name for a teenage goth band, but it's actually the title of Capcom's latest spine-chiller. Announced recently in Japan, you play a reporter named Takahashi who discovers he has the ability to read people's minds and memories.

While exploring a house in which a family was murdered in many years previously, he finds himself sucked back in time to 1929 – which is presumably when the murders originally occurred. In order to return to the present day, we're guessing he has to solve or, more likely, prevent the crime.

Glass Rose's premise and third-person perspective both suggest survival horror, but we understand that the game will focus more on slow burn psychodrama rather than heart-stopping shocks. While the plot is reminiscent of *Shadow Of Memories*, Konami's own time-travelling murder-mystery, these first shots immediately recall the vivid style and rich environments of Sega's *Shenmue*. A cerebral shocker certainly sounds intriguing, although Capcom would probably be wise to include a smattering of action, just to keep the kids' bloodlust sated... □ TC



ZONE OF THE BENDERS

Futurama finds a temporary new home on PlayStation 2.

THE TV SHOW may have been (criminally) cancelled by the Fox TV network, but Matt Groening's *Futurama*, has been picked up by SCI for a game release this summer. Spy may have been sceptical at first – words like 'cartoon licence' and 'cel-shaded' give us the fear after travesties like *The Simpsons: Skateboarding* – but having seen the game running, it actually looks impressive.

Most importantly it looks like you're playing the TV show. And, rather than restricting you to a single character, you can play with Fry, Dr Zoidberg, Bender and Leela. As you'd imagine, each has their own characteristic abilities: Leela has martial arts; Fry has wise-cracks and Bender just smashes things. A script has been penned by J Stewart Burns, who won an Emmy for his talents on the TV show, with a story that'll take our unlikely heroes through the sewers of New New York to alien planets, abandoned mines and mysterious temples.

Don't expect anything too innovative on the gameplay front – platform jumping, third-person combat and a smattering of puzzle solving – but the addition of Bender's catchphrases and Dr Zoidberg's disturbing sexual fetishes should more than make up for that. Furthermore, it's keeping the *Futurama* series alive until Fox executives realise that inexplicably killing off the TV show after only the third series is utter insanity. □ GW



ebay.com.au

NEWS FOR MAY



THE NEO-GEO Advanced Entertainment System first rolled off the production lines 12 years ago, and never attracted mainstream attention, largely because of its prohibitively expensive price tag. But SNK designed the machine to be exclusive, aiming to replicate the arcade experience at home – which now makes the system even more rare and collectible.

In fact, Neo-Geo is now arguably the most collectable videogame format ever. There were only around 130 games released for the system, and prices are continually rising as machines become harder to find.

• eBay's 'Retro/Vintage' games category is where you'll find most Neo-Geo games and hardware. Systems tend to reach high prices, with a recent PAL system in Australia selling for \$500, with a few games and two of the legendary large controllers.

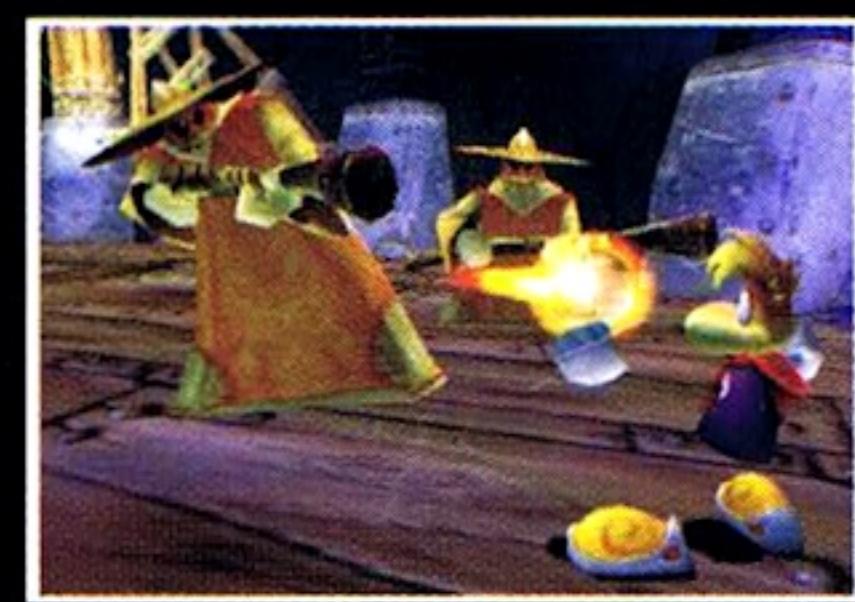
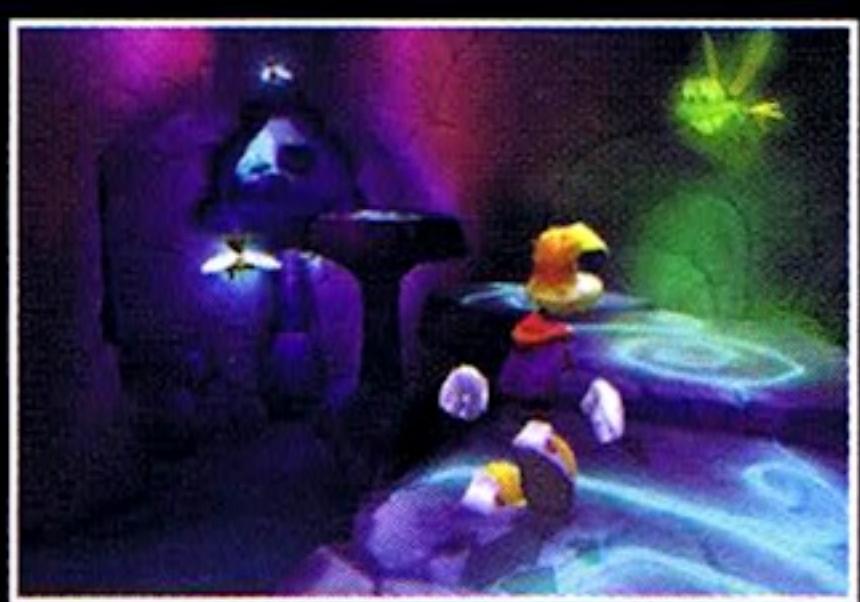
Neo-Geo excelled at 2D graphics – the most popular games include the *Metal Slug*, *Fatal Fury* and *King of Fighters* series. But you'll need a large bank balance if you'd like to start collecting. Prices tend to start around \$50 on eBay, while a mint copy of the original *Metal Slug* can now command up to \$5,000. Other recent examples include *Twinkle Star Sprites* (\$1,300), *Magical Drop 3* (\$800), *Samurai Showdown II* (\$60), *Double Dragon* (\$900) and *King of Fighters '98* (\$300). A handy price guide for Neo-Geo games can be found on www.neo-geo.com

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SPEAK YOUR MIND

SCEI talks good games with two new voice recognition titles.

AS BOB HOSKINS once said with great sincerity, "It's good to talk." Don't worry, we're not trying to sell you a new phone line and we haven't turned into a mobile phone magazine – it's just one phrase that springs to mind when looking at two new game offerings from SCEI – released this month in Japan. *Operator's Side* and *DekaVoice* both utilise voice recognition technology that allows you to partially control the game with your own voice.

It's not strictly a new concept – SCEA's online *SOCOM: US Navy SEALs* comes complete with a Logitech headset (think Britney Spears' hands-free microphone) for giving out commands to your SEALs team and communicating in online games. Even Taito's dreadful football sim *International League Soccer* was packaged with a headset allowing players to shout things like 'pass', 'shoot' and 'not there!' with mixed results.

The difference with *Operator's Side* and *DekaVoice*'s VR capability is that it's an integral part of the gameplay. In *Operator's Side* you give instructions to a waitress (Leo) trapped on a spaceship that's been attacked by aliens. By watching her via CCTV cameras you can tell her to shoot, reload and run while investigating the ship, searching for weapons and other items.

In the cel-shaded film noir world of *DekaVoice* – all soprano sax infused jazz and *Dick Tracy* comic stylings – players star as a Detective called Evan alongside his wheelchair-bound buddy Raphin, and Eli, his feisty driver. Evan can communicate with them both to help solve the various crimes the game throws at him. Evan also has a dog, John, who he can command vocally. And, for those with \$2,500 to spare, if you plug one of Sony's AIBO robo dogs into your PS2 it will respond with various actions.

Currently, *Operator's Side* is only available in Japan, but *DekaVoice* was always planned for an international release, tentatively pencilled in for September 2003. It may be a technology that's slow to gain acceptance but OPS2 reckons talking to your console is destined to become commonplace in many next-generation games. □ GW

■ ONE MAN AND HIS DOG Evan and John scope out the joint in *DekaVoice*.

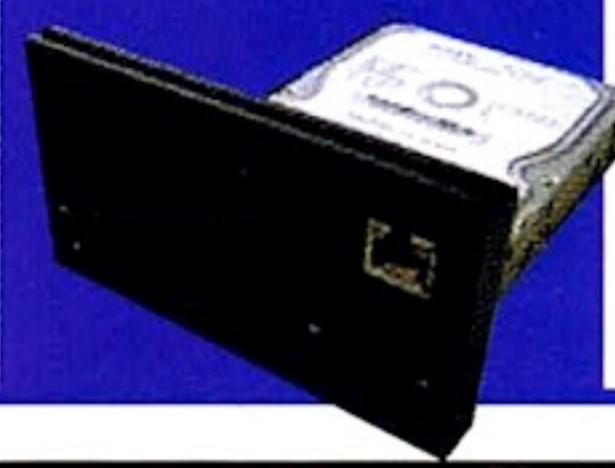


Don't expect *Burnout 3* any time soon. We've heard that there are no plans for a sequel... A game based on the next *Terminator* film is in the offing...

Hardware update! A PS2 bundled with a HDD and Network Adaptor could well be released before the end of 2003... Is it really true that Midway is being bought out by Ubi Soft?... And is EA really going to buy everything in the world?... Where did the story come from that claimed terrorist group Hezbollah is making an anti-American war game?

BLUE LINES
Short but sweet
PS2 snippets
heard by the
Ear Of Truth.

SCE Japan will begin selling the Network Adaptor and PS2 Hard Drive in game shops. It was previously only available online.



Aliens Versus Predator: Extinction is announced for PS2 in a strange top-down RTS style. Fox Interactive and EA are responsible.



YOU DIRTY LITTLE SPHINX!

THQ's new action/platformer walks like an Egyptian.

WHILE TAK AND *The Power Of JuJu* has the younger end of the market wrapped up, THQ's second free-roaming action/platformer is busy making bold claims for itself as the 'defining game' for next-generation consoles.

Residing in ancient Egypt, *Sphinx* is a story-led adventure described with familiar-sounding vocabulary – 'dark secrets', 'fantastic creatures', 'special powers', 'stolen mystical crowns' and 'magic portals'. And if that isn't whetting your appetite, you might be interested to know that *Sphinx* is in experienced hands. Namely Eurocom, the developer behind *James Bond 007: NightFire*. The crunch question is, will we actually like the androgynous and nondescript main character (seen here doing a spot of sightseeing at the pyramids)? Only time will tell. □ GW

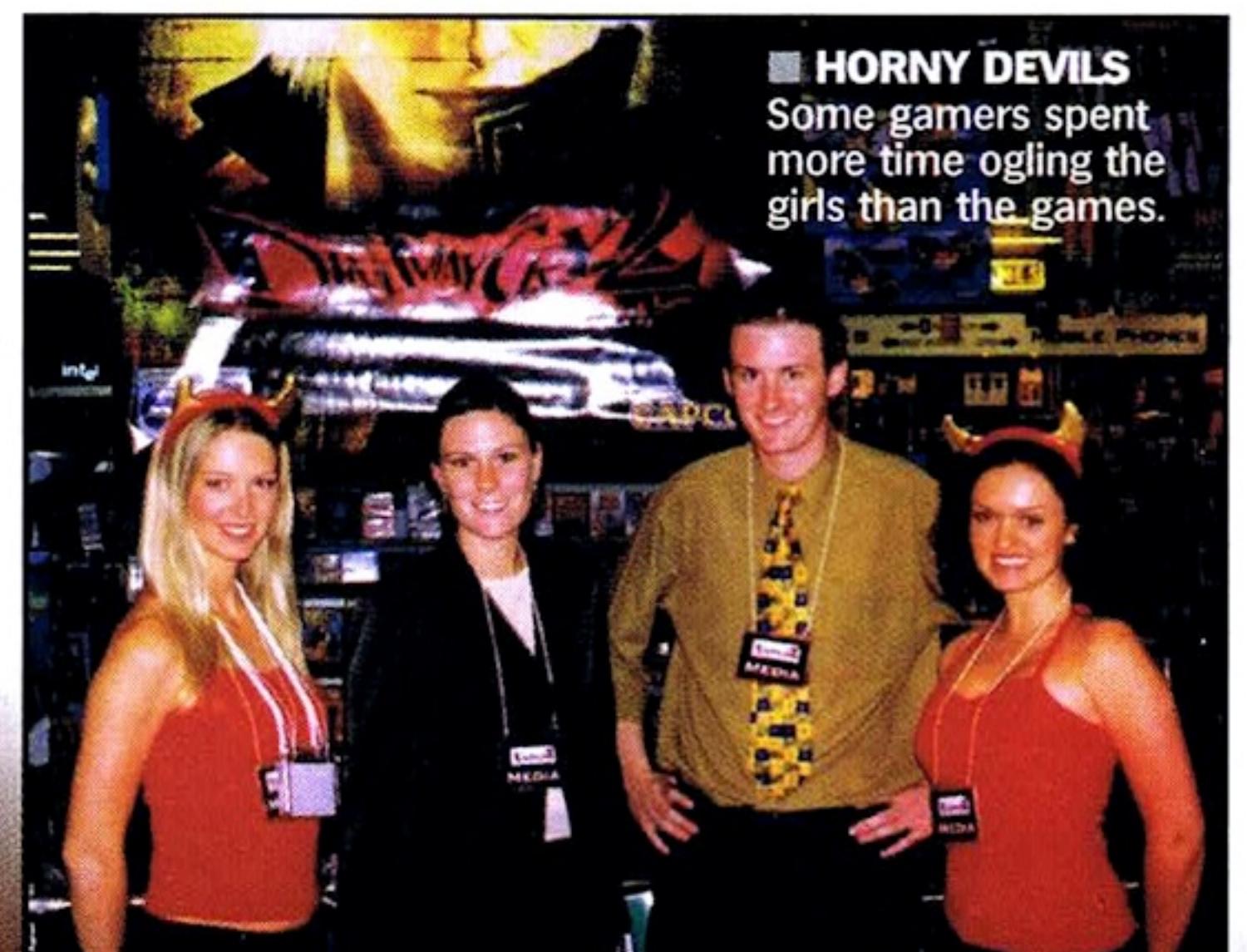


■ KICKING UP A SPHINX Our hero rocks the casbah.

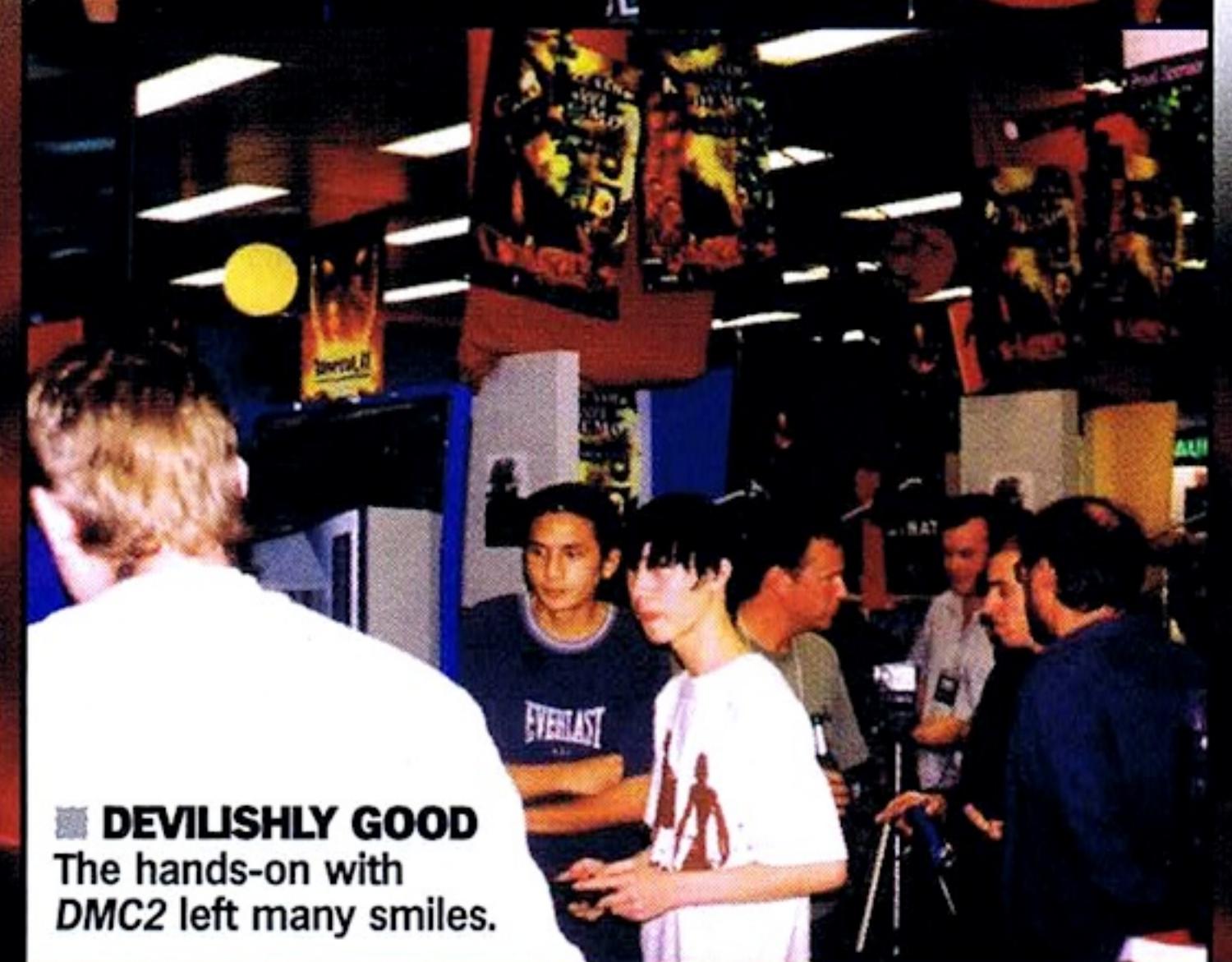
TEARS OF JOY

Devil May Cry 2 was shown off early to hordes of fans in Sydney.

■ GO HARVEY GO Harvey Norman's Moore Park store in Sydney was once again the venue of choice for NSW gaming fans. This time the store unveiled THQ's superb shooter, *Devil May Cry 2*, in playable form weeks before its release at a special preview night for the media and public. Anyone who could keep their eyes off the DMC girls long enough had great fun carving up the demons with Dante's new attacks. □ NP



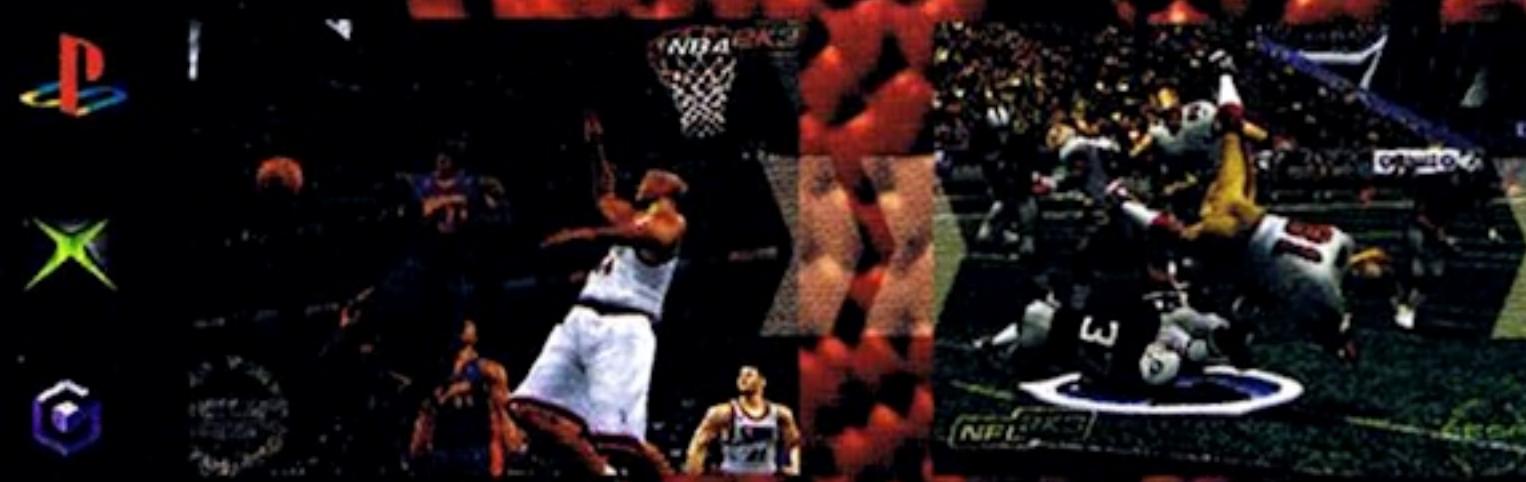
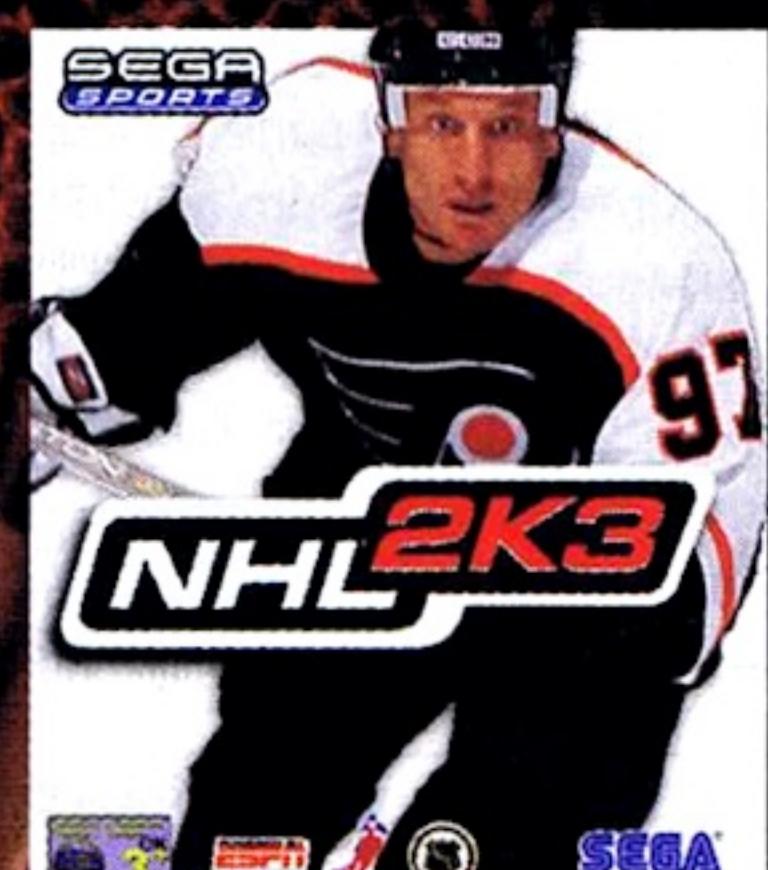
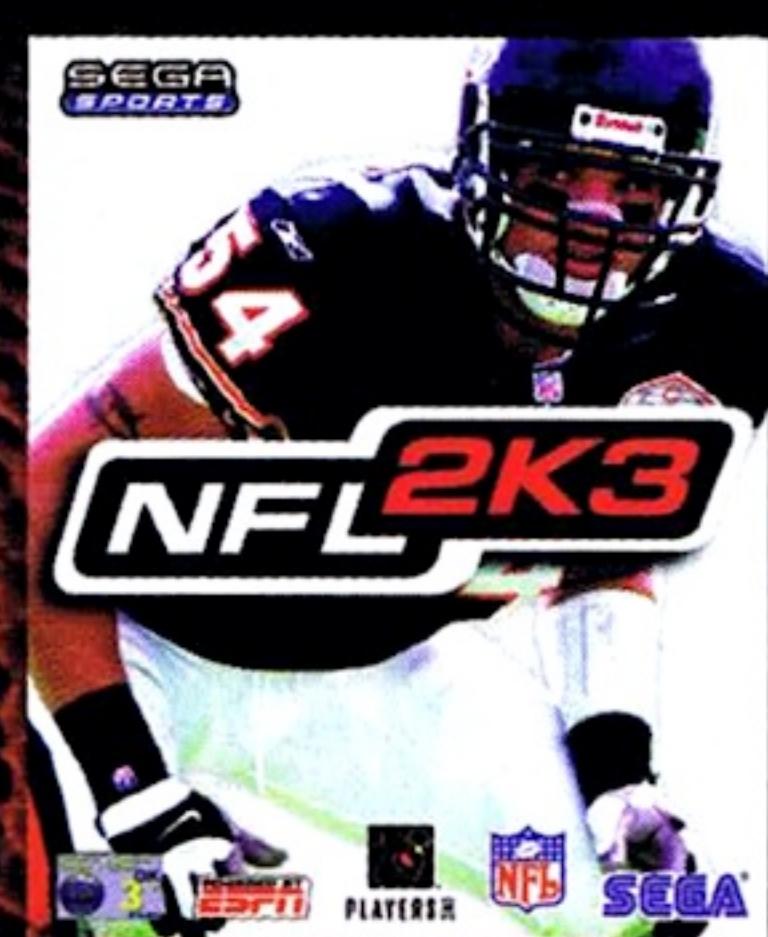
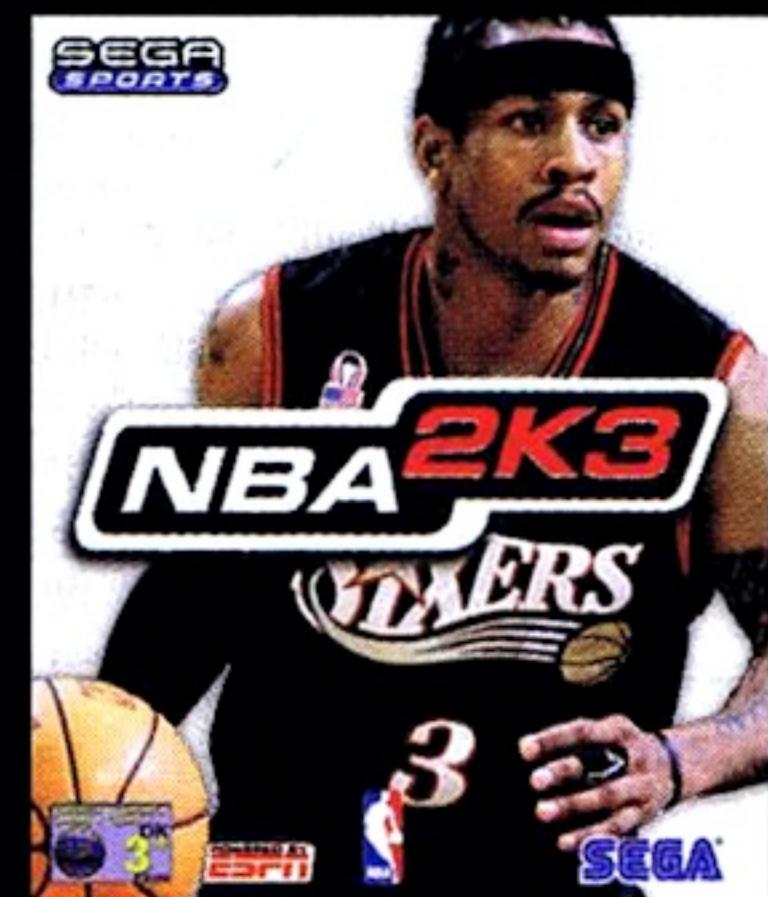
■ HORNY DEVILS Some gamers spent more time ogling the girls than the games.



■ DEVILISHLY GOOD The hands-on with DMC2 left many smiles.

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NBA2K3

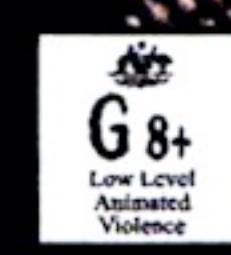
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NHL2K3

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CORPSE IN THE ACT We're looking forward to doing autopsies. Shudder.



RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

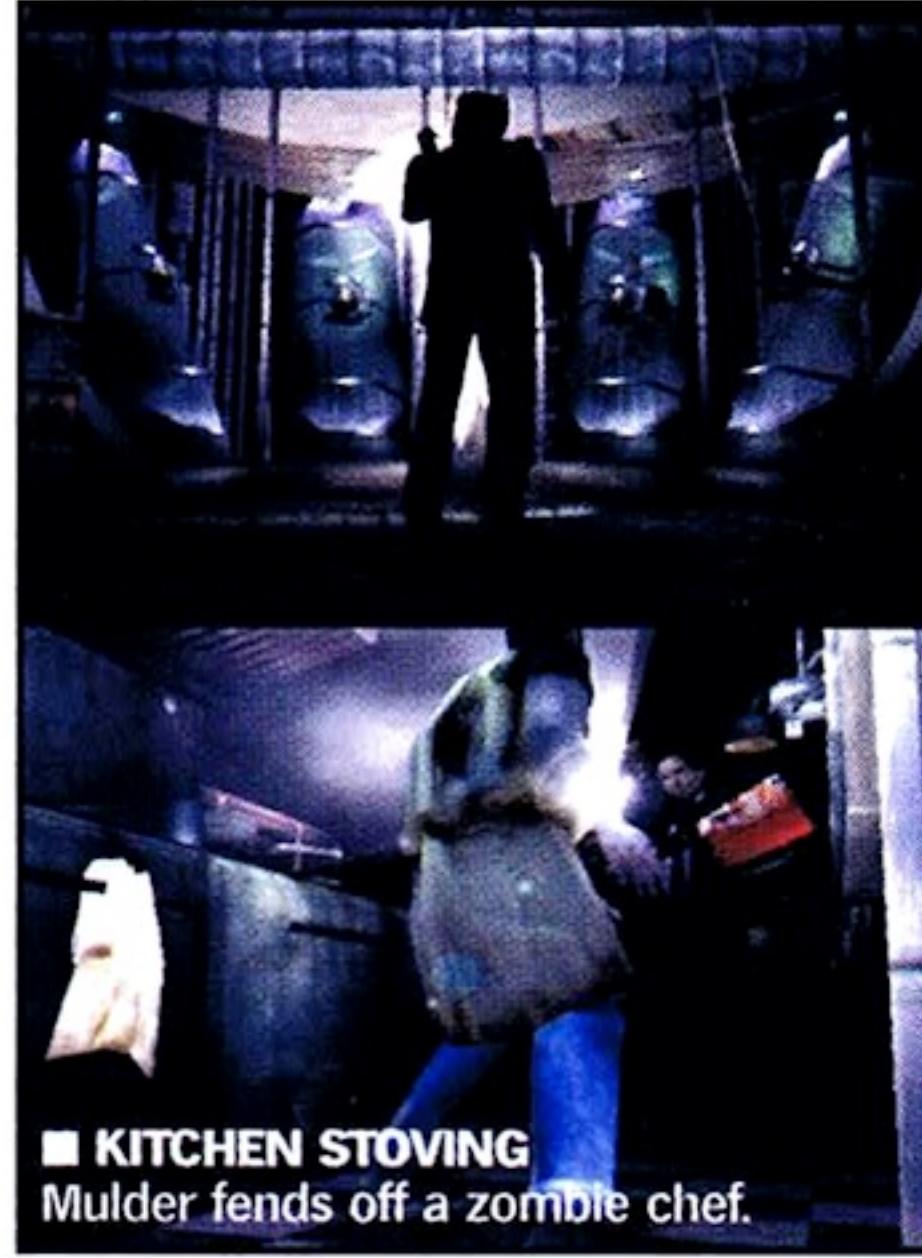
It's all a big conspiracy! X-Files: Resist Or Serve makes us paranoid.

FORGET ALL THAT nonsense about genetically engineered bees, chain-smoking spooks and interstellar conspiracies, frankly, the biggest mystery is why there isn't an X-Files survival horror game on PS2 already. But with the final episode of the TV series in the can, Sierra Entertainment has decided now is the time to unveil *X-Files: Resist Or Serve*.

The game sees Mulder and Scully (no sign of grumpy boots Doggett) heading to a small town in the Rocky Mountains to investigate a series of murders linked to ghost sightings, the undead and other paranormal phenomena.'

The usual survival horror staples – skewed camera angles, etc – are present and correct, and the game is wrapped in the TV show's trademark moody ambience. In terms of authenticity, *Resist Or Serve* is a fanboy's wet-dream, with music from the TV show, a full supporting cast and voice acting provided by Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny.

The game also promises to shed light on some of *The X-Files*' more convoluted plot points, like that icky black gunk – which might be ectoplasm, or just what happens to Coca Cola if you leave it out in the sun too long. □ TC



KITCHEN STOVING
Mulder fends off a zombie chef.

THE TRUTH IS IN HERE...
OPS2's dossier of mysterious X-Files facts.

Despite 33 occasions where Mulder and Scully could have got it on, they've only snogged three times.

Elvis has been mentioned 11 times in The X-Files.

The most popular location for X-Files deaths is the bathroom (69 times).

US punk band Yellow Sloth Chicken Broth have a song called Gillian Anderson (I Wanna Be With You).

Mulder has dropped his gun at an inopportune moment 22 times.

According to The X-Files timeline, Scully was pregnant for 12 months.

Toadie, of Neighbours fame, is a confessed X-Files fan.

In Thailand, The X-Files is known as Fam Lub Kadee Pisawong. Literally translated this means 'The Secret Folders Of Mysterious Cases'.

Mulder is caught perusing porn 18 times.

Scully says, "Oh my God," at least once every episode.

BLUE LINES
Short but sweet
PS2 snippets
heard by the
Ear Of Truth.

Activision's stealth ninja title Tenchu is being made into a Japanese manga comic. Check www.fromsoftware.co.jp for further info.



A cut-price tennis game is coming soon. Aqua Pacific's Perfect Ace Pro Tennis Tournament features 32 tennis players and 16 stadiums.



WHAT THE HELL IS... .HACK?

The skinny on Bandai's perplexing anime crossover hit.

LAUNCHING IN JAPAN simultaneously with a TV anime series, OAV (original animation video) series and comic, the multimedia game project *.hack* (pronounced 'dot hack') is populated by four different casts and storylines. Set in the near future, a popular online game known as *The World* serves as the element that unifies them. Here's a brief rundown of key events in the *.hack* timeline.

- **2005** The world's internet is closed down for an hour by a virus called Pluto's Kiss, causing general chaos.
- **2006** The internet is replaced by a new operating system called ALMIT that quickly becomes the world's new communications standard. Online gaming is all but banned.
- **2007** As an exemption by the governing body, a network game known as *The World* is announced in November 2007. It becomes an instant hit and eventually attracts 20 million players.

The various stories of the *.hack* universe occur both in the real world and the game's world. While the casts share a similar appearance, thanks to the predetermined character classes, their users and names are different. The TV series *.hack//SIGN* is primarily set within *The World* and focuses on a sorcerer, Tsukasa, who finds himself unable to log

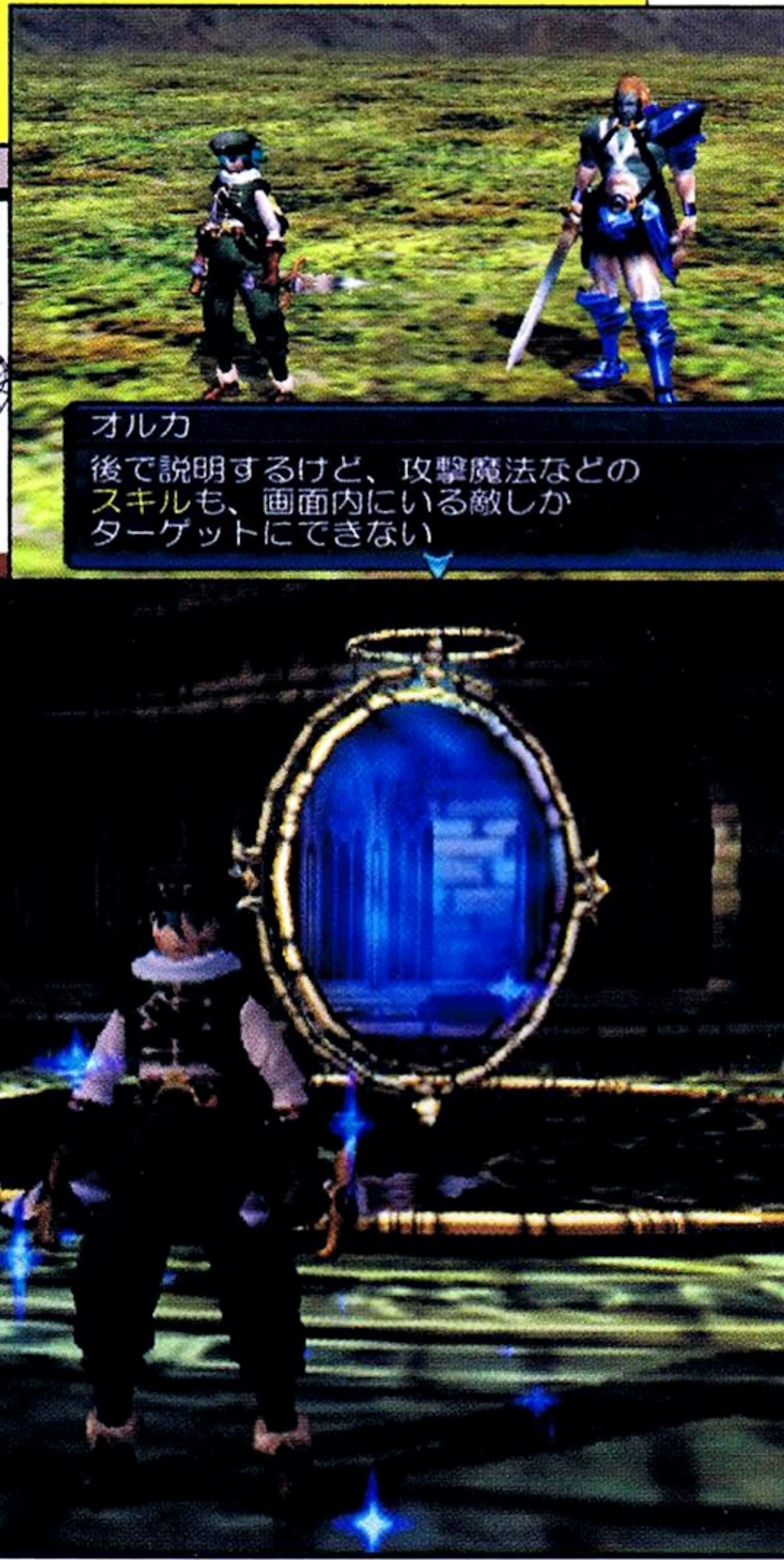
out of the game. The phenomenon is not an isolated case; investigating the mystery is Bear, an older swordsman who helps new players. Joining Tsukasa in the cast are youngsters such as the independent Mimiru and axe-wielding heroine Subaru.

The four-part game is set after these events. We discover that players are falling into comas and protagonist Kite sets out to uncover the reason. Black Rose, like Bear in *.hack//SIGN*, helps a friend who cannot log out. Included on a separate disc is the OAV *.hack//Luminosity*, which is set in the real world and depicts the lives of various other players of the game.

Volume three is the latest *.hack* game released in Japan. Available since mid December, it has shifted over 133,000 units so far. Last, but not least, the comic *.hack//Tasogare No Uewa Densetsu* takes place four years after the now legendary events and characters depicted in the PS2 game's story. It features a pair of younger protagonists, Shugo and Rena, who win characters modelled after Kite and Black Rose respectively, for use in the game. They log on to *The World* and go adventuring in the footsteps of their heroes. The comic has in turn spawned an anime spin-off, now airing in Japan. □ AW



.HACK 'N' SLASH
Screens from Volume 1 of the *.hack* series.





48 HOURS

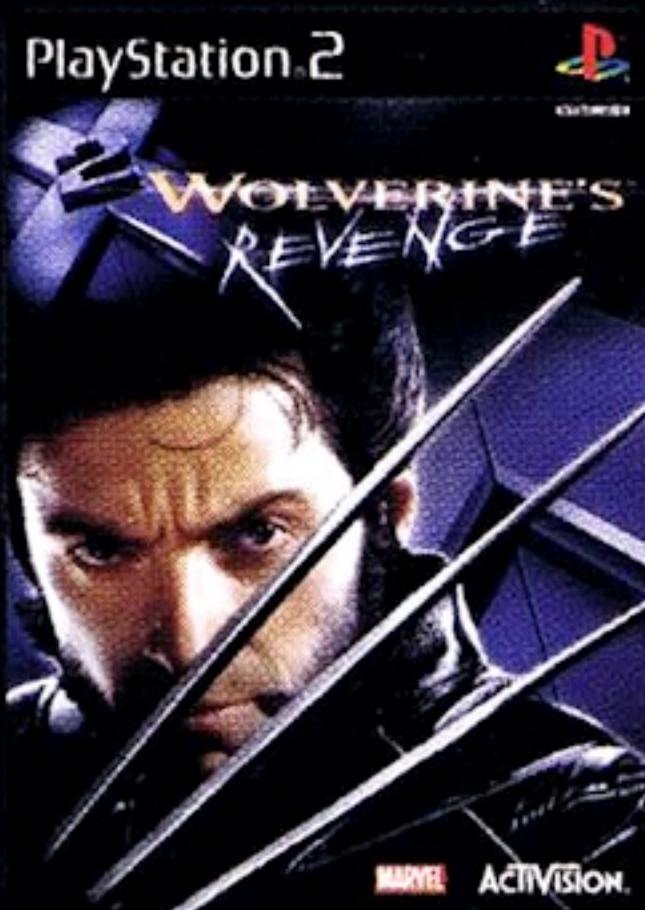
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Screenshots taken from PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system.

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inform

PS2 MARCH
TOP 40 GAMES

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
1	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Adventure	Take 2
2	The Getaway	Adventure	Sony
3	Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	Action	Acclaim
4	The Sims	Strategy	EA
5	Kingdom Hearts	Adventure	Disney
6	Grand Theft Auto 3	Adventure	Take 2
7	Sly Raccoon	Adventure	Sony
8	Dragonball Z: Budokai Fighters	Action	Infogrames
9	Tenchi: Wrath of Heaven	Action	Activision
10	Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers	RPG	EA
11	Medal Of Honor: Frontline	Action	EA
12	V8 Supercars	Racing	Infogrames
13	Tiger Woods PGA USA Tour 2003	Sports	EA
14	Red Faction 2	Action	THQ
15	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Sports	Activision
16	Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Racing	EA
17	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Strategy	Ubi Soft
18	Pac-Man 2	Action	Sony
19	FIFA 2003	Sports	EA
20	Bond 007: Nightfire	Action	EA
21	Tekken 4	Action	Sony
22	WWE SmackDown 4	Sports	THQ
23	Virtua Tennis 2	Sports	Acclaim
24	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Action	Infogrames
25	NBA Live 2003	Sports	EA
26	Star Wars: Clone Wars	Action	EA
27	AFL Live 2003	Sports	Acclaim
28	Harry Potter: Chamber Of Secrets	Adventure	EA
29	BMX XXX	Sports	Acclaim
30	Devil May Cry	Action	THQ
31	Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	Adventure	Vivendi
32	Spyro: Enter The Dragonfly	Adventure	Vivendi
33	Conflict: Desert Storm	Action	Infogrames
34	Burnout 2: Point of Impact	Racing	Acclaim
35	Max Payne	Action	Take 2
36	Ty the Tasmanian Tiger	Action	Infogrames
37	Final Fantasy X	RPG	Sony
38	Burnout	Racing	Acclaim
39	ATV Quad Power Racing	Racing	Acclaim
40	Colin McRae Rally 3	Racing	Infogrames

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

MAY

	Category	Publisher
BloodRayne	Action/adventure	Vivendi
Dancing Stage Mega Mix	Dancing	Infogrames
Die Hard: Vendetta	FPS	Vivendi
Enter The Matrix	Action/adventure	Infogrames
Eye Toy	Camera game	Sony
Ghost Vibration	Action	Infogrames
Gladius	Strategy	TBA
Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb	Action/adventure	EA
Moto GP3	Racing	Sony
NBA Street Volume 2	Basketball	EA
Primal	Adventure	Sony
Return To Castle Wolfenstein	FPS	Activision
RTX Red Rock	Action/adventure	EA
Shinobi	Action	Sony
Speed Kings	Driving	Acclaim
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs	Combat sim	Sony
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Raven Shield	Action	Ubi Soft
War of the Monsters	Action	Sony
World Championship Snooker	Sports	Infogrames

JUNE

	Category	Publisher
Backyard Wrestling	Wrestling	Infogrames
Black And Bruised	Boxing	Vivendi
Breath Of Fire V	RPG	THQ
Clock Tower 3	Survival Horror	THQ
Dead To Rights	Action	EA
Def Jam Vendetta	Wrestling	EA
Dragon's Lair 3D	3D Platformer	THQ
Dungeons and Dragons Heroes	Action	Infogrames
Evil Dead: A Fistful Of Boomstick	Action/adventure	THQ
Freedom: Battle For Liberty Island	Action/adventure	EA
Hulk, The	Action	Vivendi
Ice Nine	Action/adventure	THQ
Indy Car Series	Racing	Infogrames
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter	FPS	Vivendi
Red Dead Revolver	Action	THQ
Resident Evil: Dead Aim	Lightgun	THQ
Rise To Honor	Action	Sony
Silent Hill 3	Survival horror	Infogrames
Starsky & Hutch	Action	Vivendi
The Great Escape	Action/adventure	Infogrames
Wakeboarding Unleashed	Wakeboarding	Activision
ZOE: The 2nd Runner	Mech action	Infogrames

JULY

	Category	Publisher
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon	Beat-'em-up	Ubi Soft
Hardware	Online	Sony
Soul Calibur II	Beat-'em-up	EA
Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness	Action/adventure	Infogrames
True Crime: Streets of LA	Driving/action	Activision

AUGUST

	Category	Publisher
Aliens Vs Predator	FPS	EA
Gladius	Shooter	EA
TBC 2003	Category	Publisher
A Sound Of Thunder	Action	THQ
Alter Echo	Adventure	THQ
Area 51	Adventure	Acclaim
Batman 2	Action	Ubi Soft
Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Action	THQ
Blow Out	Shoot-'em-up	TBA

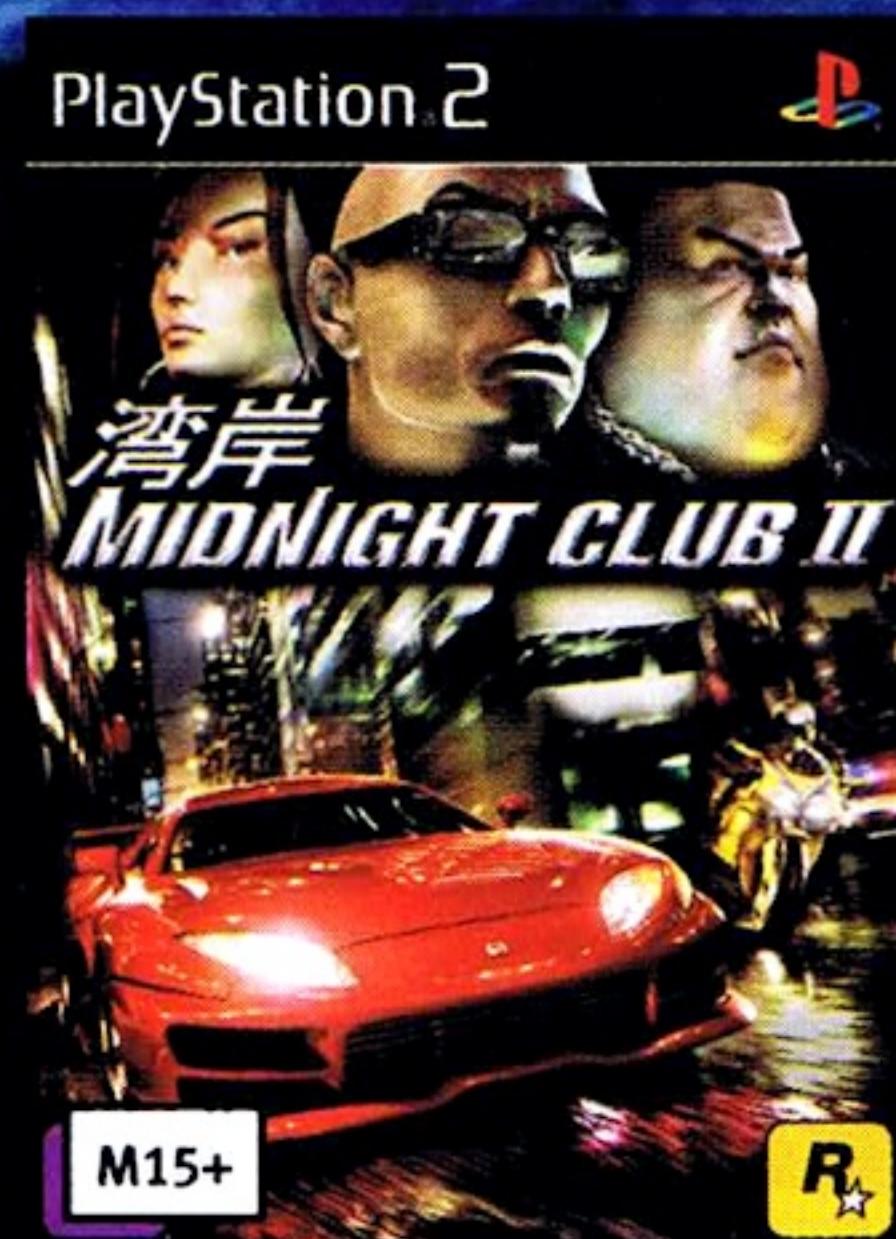
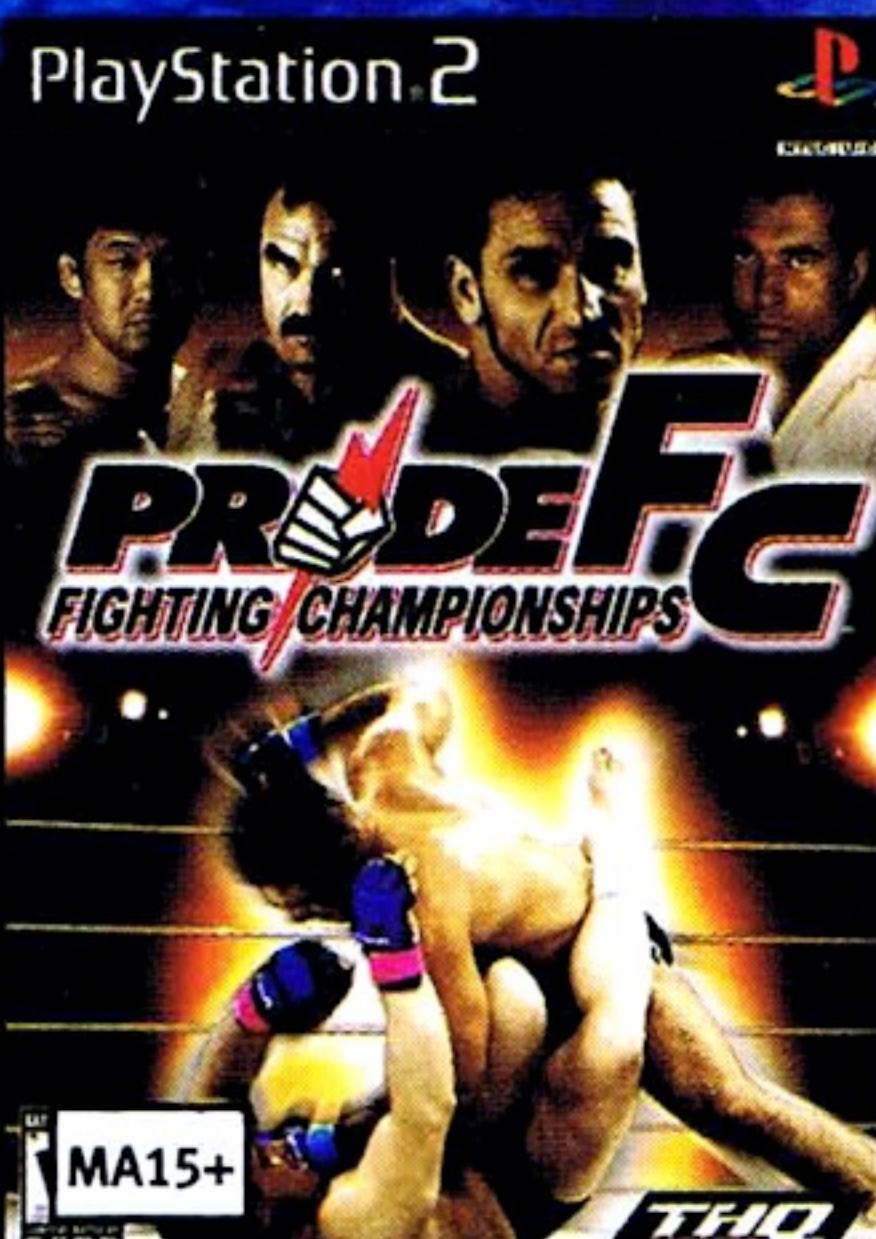
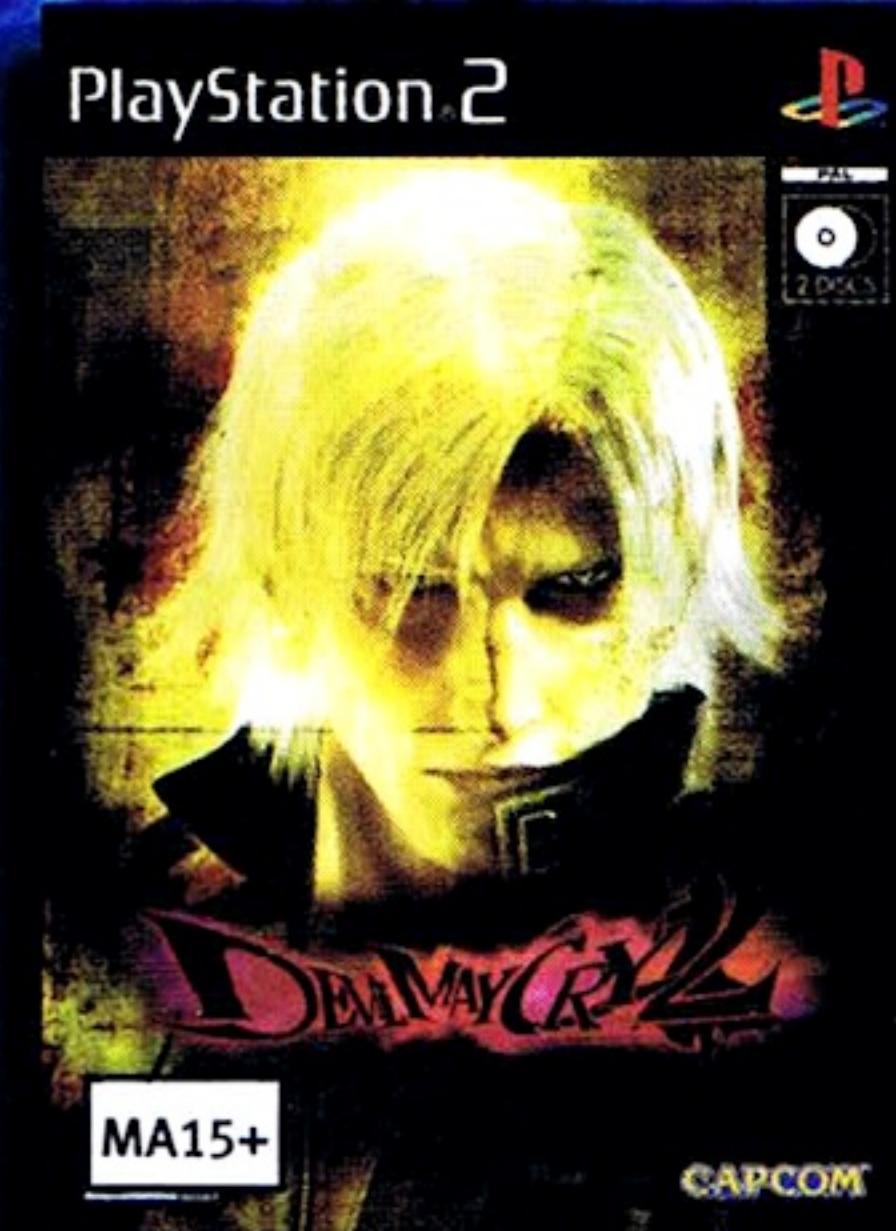
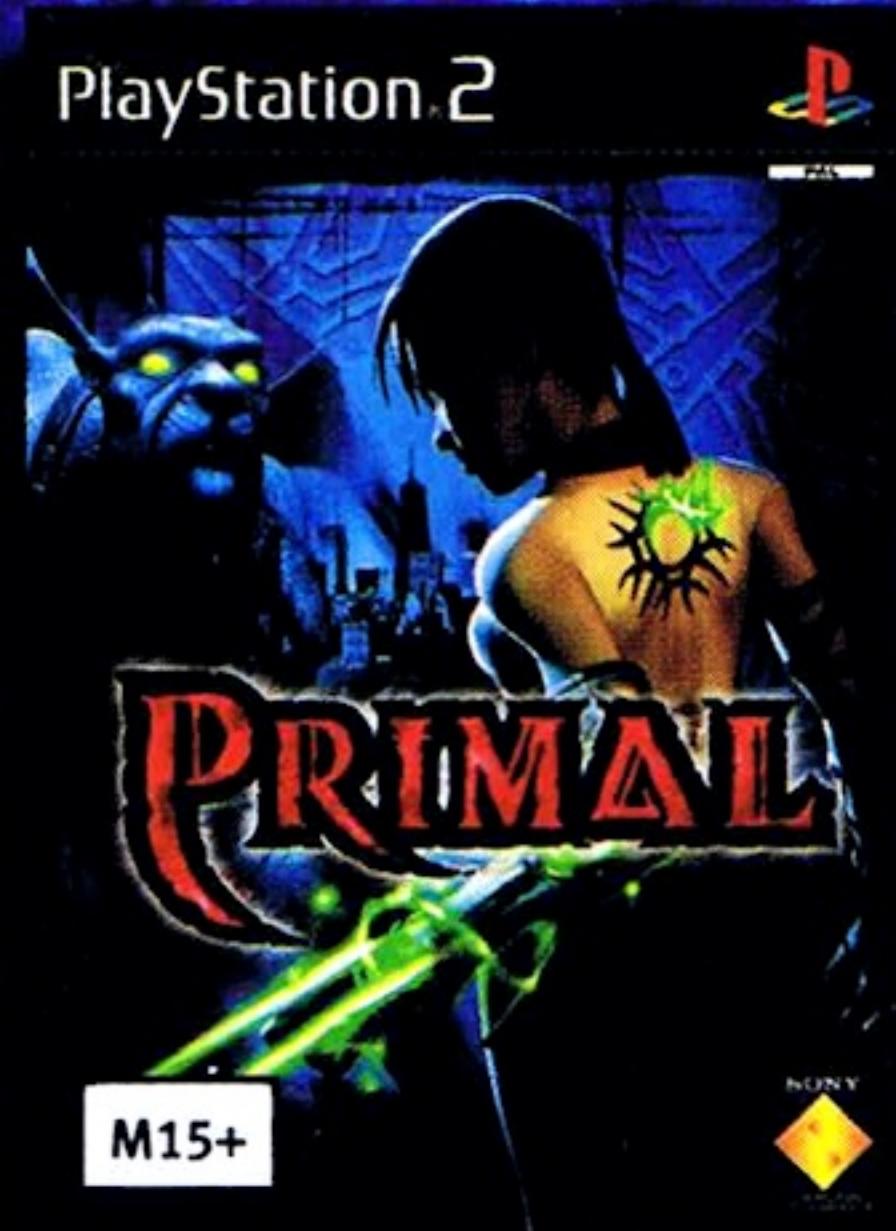
PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

Category

Category	Publisher	Adventure	Infogrames
Broken Sword: The Sleeping Dragon		Adventure	Infogrames
Celebrity Deathmatch		Beat-'em-up	Take 2
Cricket 2004		Sports	EA
Curse		Adventure	TBA
Club Football		Football sim	Infogrames
Cy Girls		Action	Infogrames
Delta Force Land Warrior		Action	EA
Destruction Derby 4		Driving	Sony
Driver 3		Driving/action	Infogrames
Ecks Vs Sever		FPS	THQ
Enclave		Adventure	TBA
EverQuest Online Adventures		Online RPG	Sony
EXO		Mech action	Infogrames
Far Cry		Action	Ubi Soft
Fear Effect: Inferno		Adventure	Infogrames
FireWarrior		FPS	THQ
Final Fantasy X-2		RPG	Sony
Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse		Action	Sony
Freaky Flyers		Flight action	Acclaim
Freedom: The Battle for Liberty Island		TBA	EA
Frequency 2		Rhythm action	Sony
Fugitive Hunter		FPS	Infogrames
Futurama		Adventure	Infogrames
Galerians: Ash		RPG	THQ
Ghost Hunter		Adventure	Sony
Gladiator		Beat-'em-up	Acclaim
Harry Potter Quidditch		Action	EA
Indy Racing League		Racing	Infogrames
Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death		Action	Vivendi
King Of Route 66		Driving	TBA
Lamborghini		Racing	Activision
Madden NFL 2004		Sports	EA
Mafia		Action/adventure	Take 2
Malice		Platformer	Vivendi
Mission Impossible: Operation Surma		Action	Infogrames
My Street		Party game	Sony
NBA Ballers		Basketball sim	Acclaim
NBA Starting Five		Basketball sim	Infogrames
Pro Evolution 3		Football sim	Infogrames
Project BG & E		Platformer	Ubi Soft
Project Manhunt		TBC	Take 2
Pterosaur		Adventure	TBA
Punisher		Shooter	THQ
Raging Blades		RPG	TBA
Resident Evil Online		Online adventure	THQ
Rolling		Extreme sports	Activision
Rugby 2004		Sports	EA
Rygar: The Legendary Adventure		Action/adventure	THQ
Shoot To Kill		FPS	Infogrames
Splashdown 2		Racing	THQ
Starcraft: Ghost		Action	Vivendi
Star Wars: Galaxies		Online RPG	EA
Sulkyden III		RPG	Infogrames
Tak and the Power of Juju		Platformer	THQ
This Is Football 2004		Football sim	Sony
The Lost		Adventure	Ubi Soft
The X-Files		Survival horror	Vivendi
Tribes: Aerial Assault		FPS	Vivendi
Urban Freestyle		Extreme sports	Acclaim

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MYER **GRACE BROS**

PlayStation®2

www.wotm-game.com

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THE MONSTERS ARE COMING!

NEW INFO



NAME Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel Of Darkness
 PUBLISHER Eidos
 DEVELOPER Core Design
 WEB SITE www.tomraider.com
 RELEASE June

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

96%



LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

We've played The Angel Of Darkness! And we like what we've seen!

SO YOU'VE BEEN TO CORE, WHAT'S THE GAME LIKE?

After a gestation period long enough to bring tears to an elephant's eye, *The Angel Of Darkness* is almost ready, and you'll be glad to hear it takes after its parents. Bless 'em. Worried about the whole fugitive on the run story? No need. Although Lara's flight from the murder scene of her mentor, Werner Von Croy, propels the story, it's just the Tabasco in the enchilada. This is classic *Tomb Raider* – huge, elaborate environments, fiendish puzzles and a malevolent nemesis all await patient gamers.

WHAT ABOUT STEALTH, LEVEL-UPS AND KURTIS?

Lara can do everything she's learnt over her previous five PSone adventures, and this existing repertoire has been refined. But now she can also walk, crawl, fire and shimmy across walls in a Stealth mode. And no, it doesn't feel 'bolted-on' for *MGS2* fans. There are also eight stamina level-ups for Lara and Kurt's upper and lower body strength. You'll never get stuck without these, but find them and new routes through levels will open up to your buffed, bad self. And talking of new boy Kurtis Trent, he's a whole lot cooler to play than the artwork suggests. Still don't like him? Relax, he's yours for just 15-20% of *Angel Of Darkness*'s estimated 40 hours of gameplay.

SO WILL IT ALL BE WORTH THE SINFUL WAIT?

Lord knows we've all had our patience tested, but Core seems to be respecting that fine line between innovation and heritage admirably. New elements like hand-to-hand combat, free climbing on rock faces and the ability to talk with characters expand Lara's skills without detracting from what originally made the series great. Namely, solving bastard puzzles, reaching those tiny exit points in cavernous chambers and wondering if Lara will ever get into her diving suit (and yes, she does...) □ PF

OPINION

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

ANGEL OF DARKNESS isn't a rumour after all. It looks and plays like classic *Tomb Raider* despite the new features. Whether that's enough to maintain the franchise's unbroken 10/10 record...

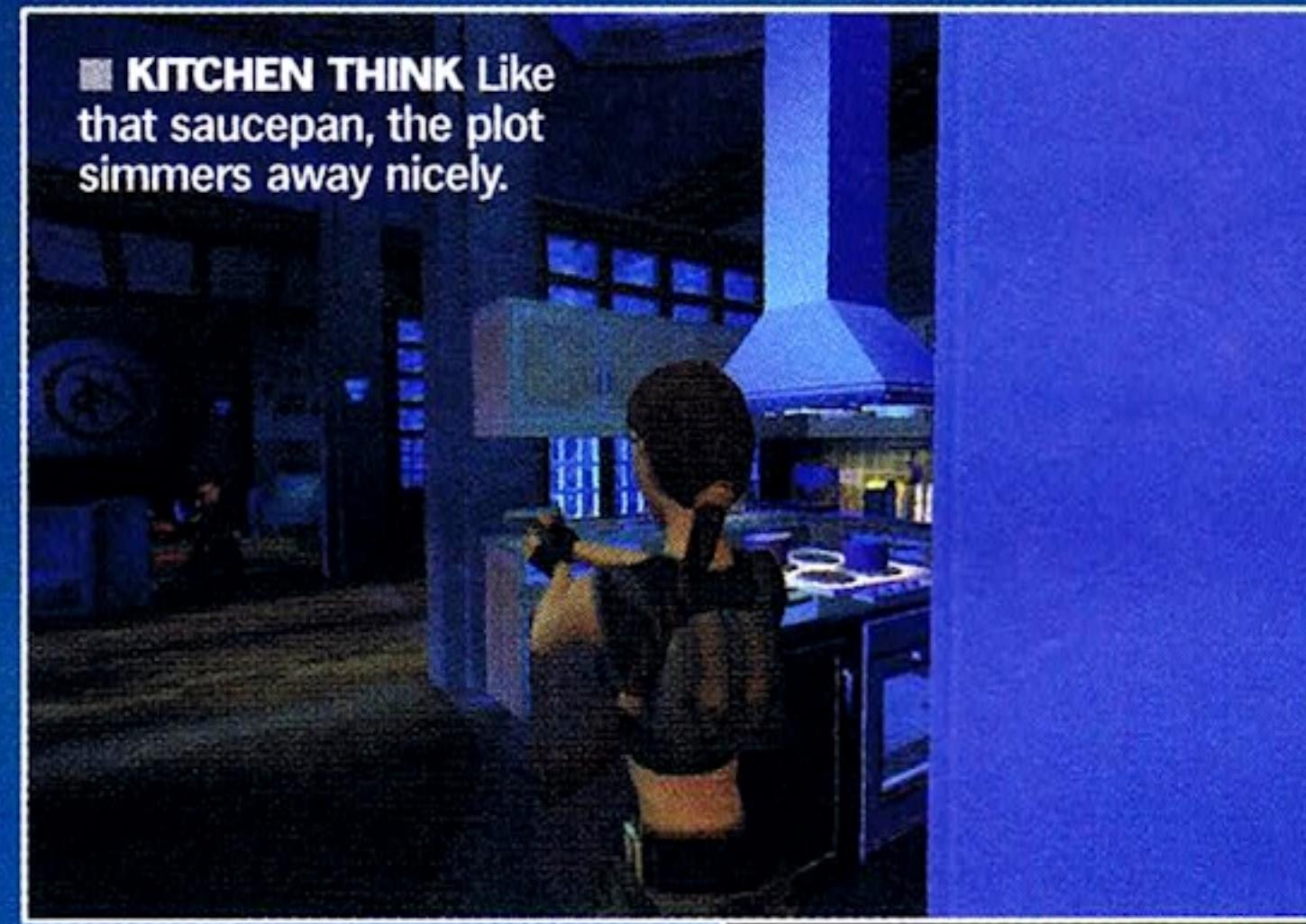


• **DavManStyler:** Make it worth the wait! More stealth, less ogling... *sniff* they grow up so fast...

• **RedXII:** Core had better pull something totally and utterly amazing out of the bag for the game. Good luck!

HOT OR NOT?

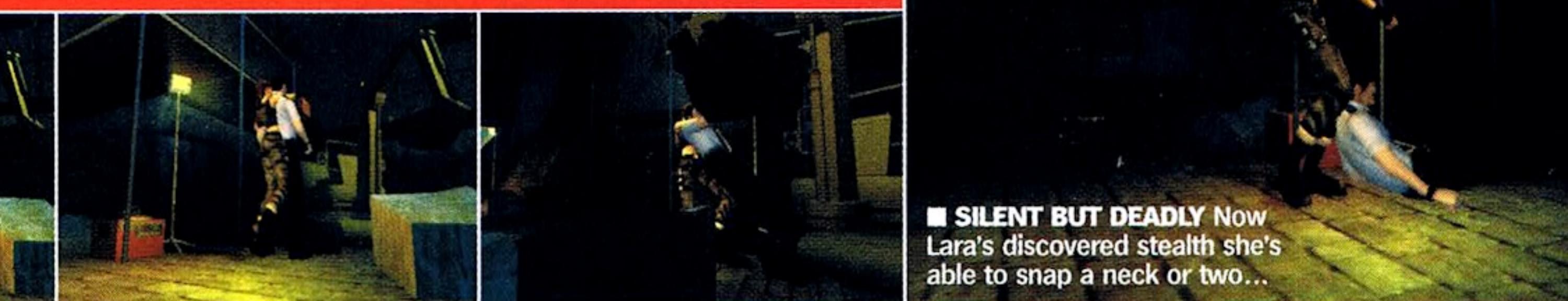
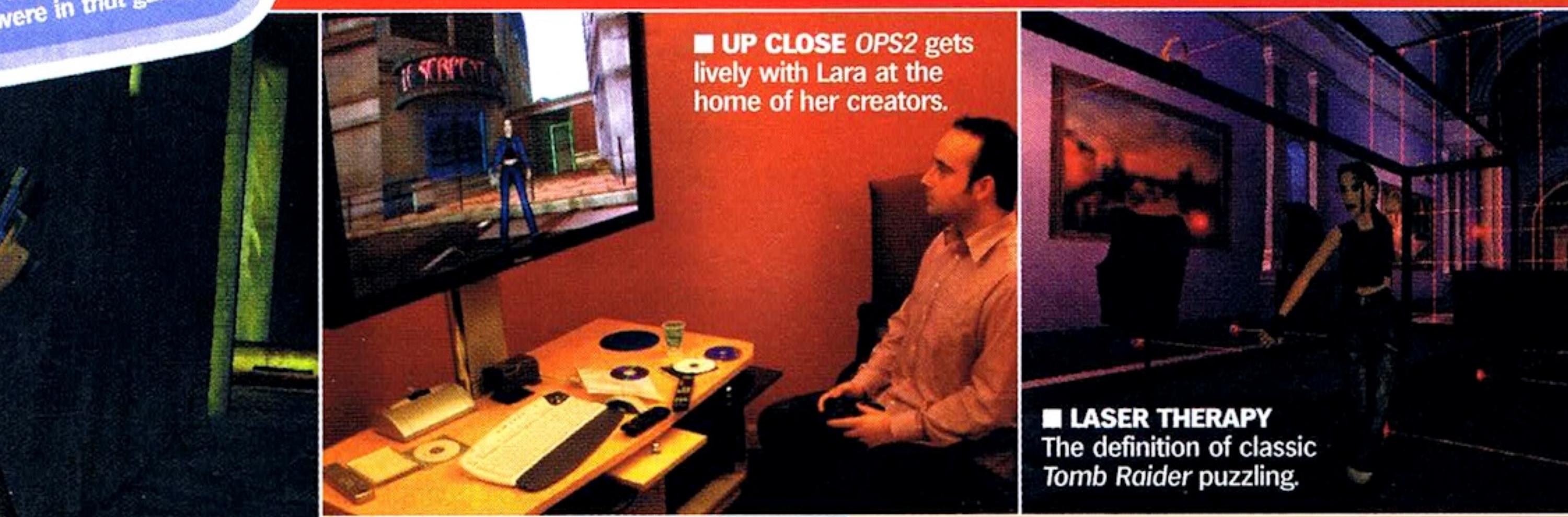
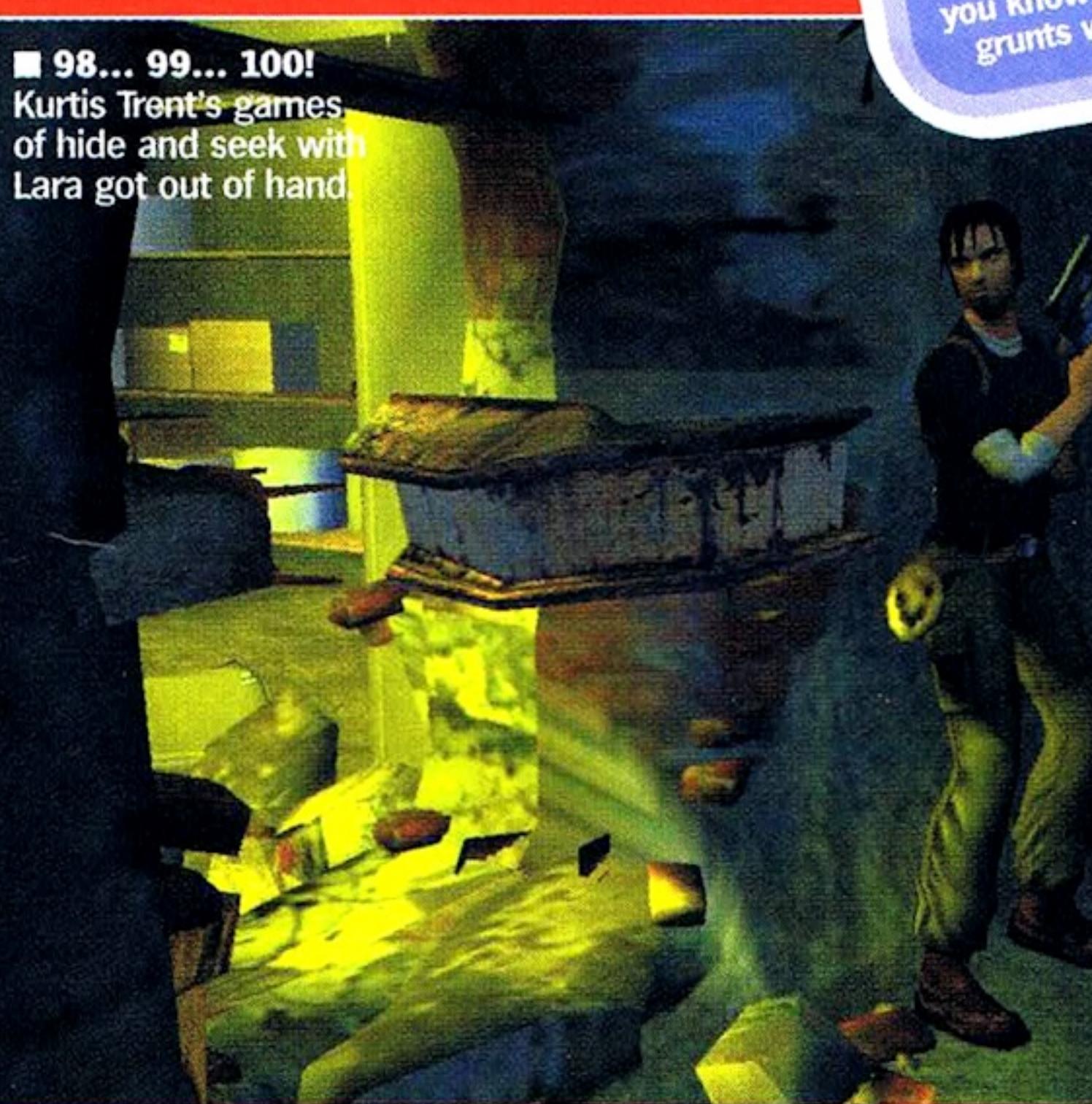
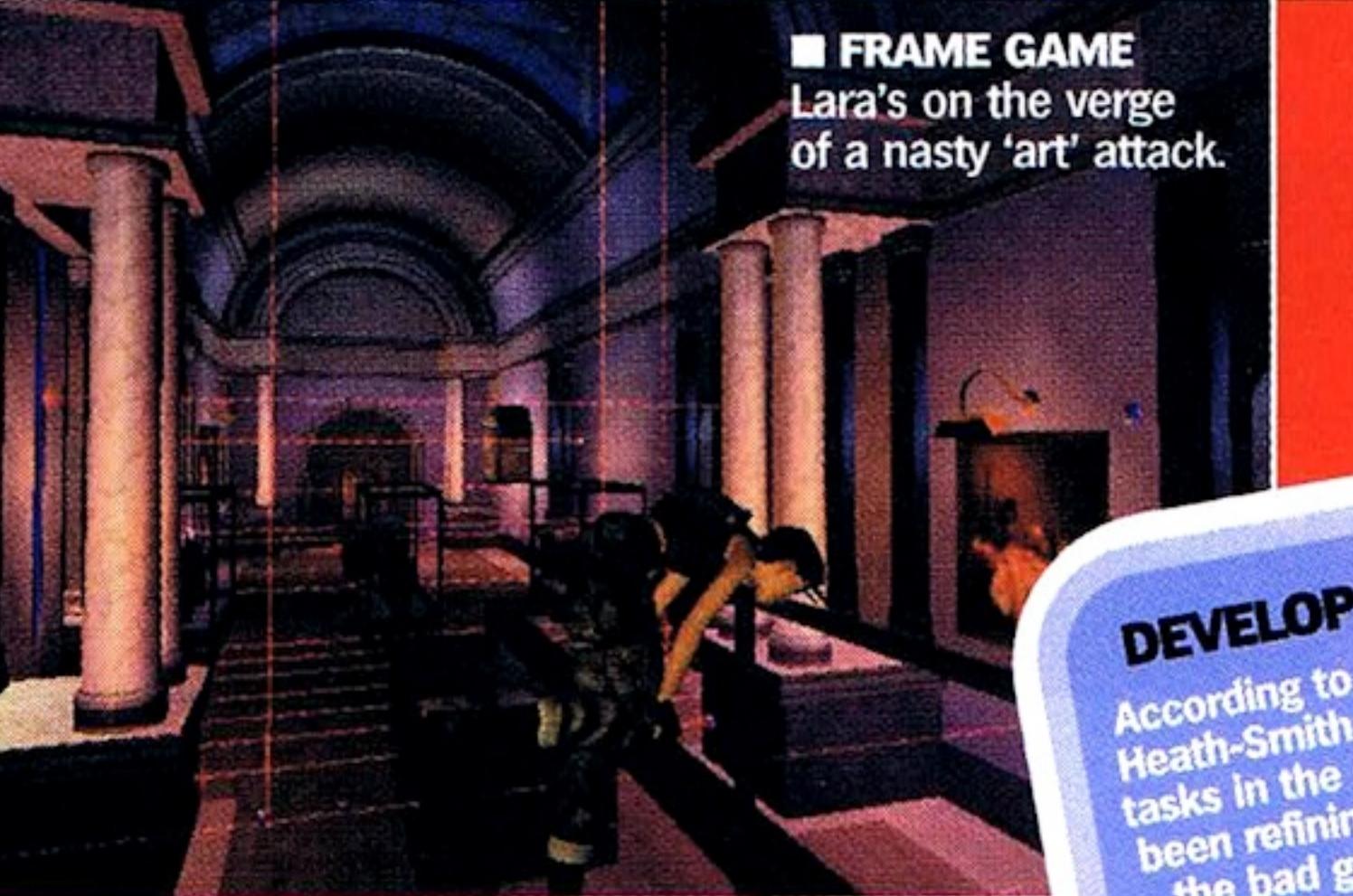
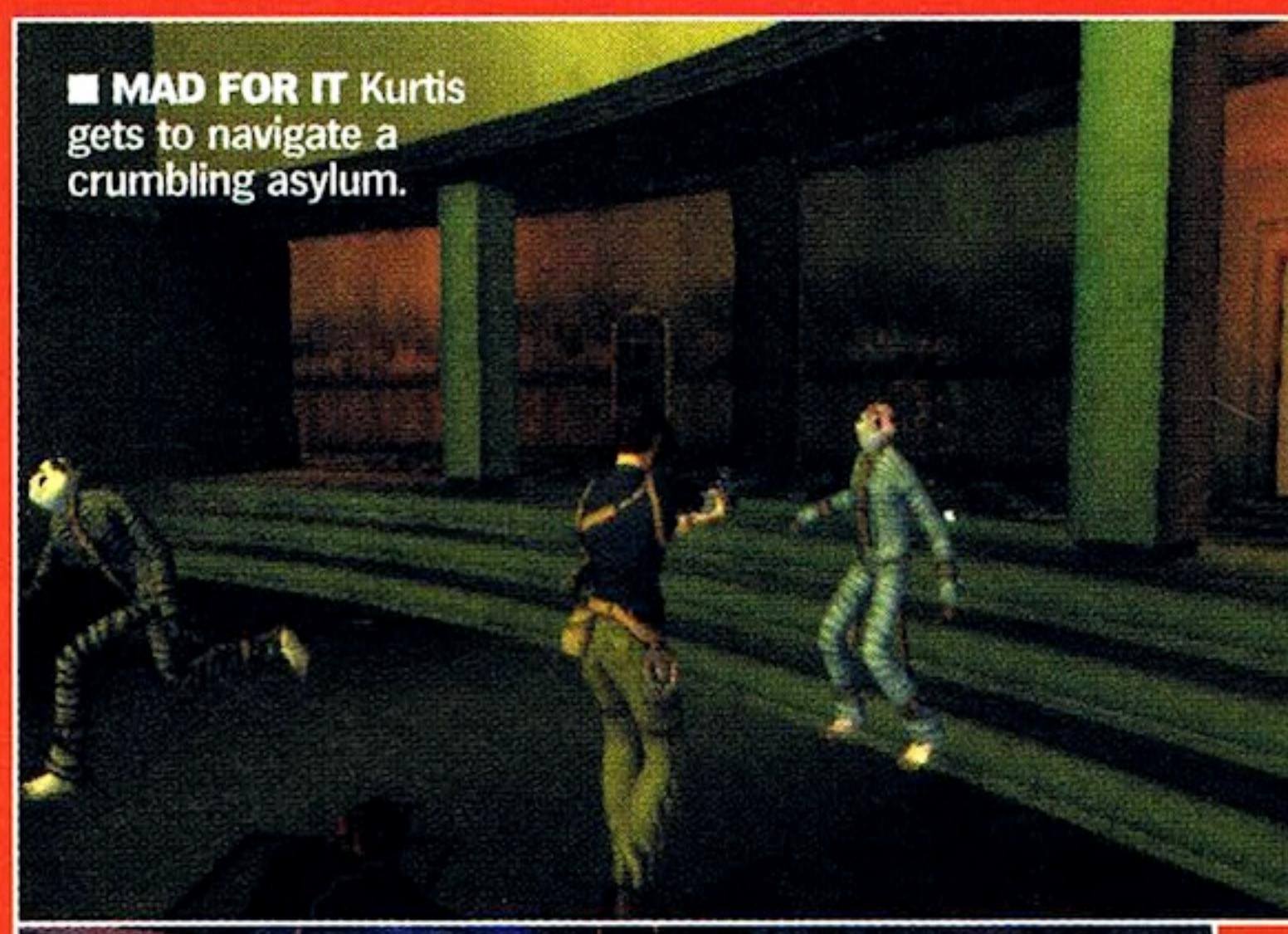
FRIGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



■ **KITCHEN THINK** Like that saucepan, the plot simmers away nicely.

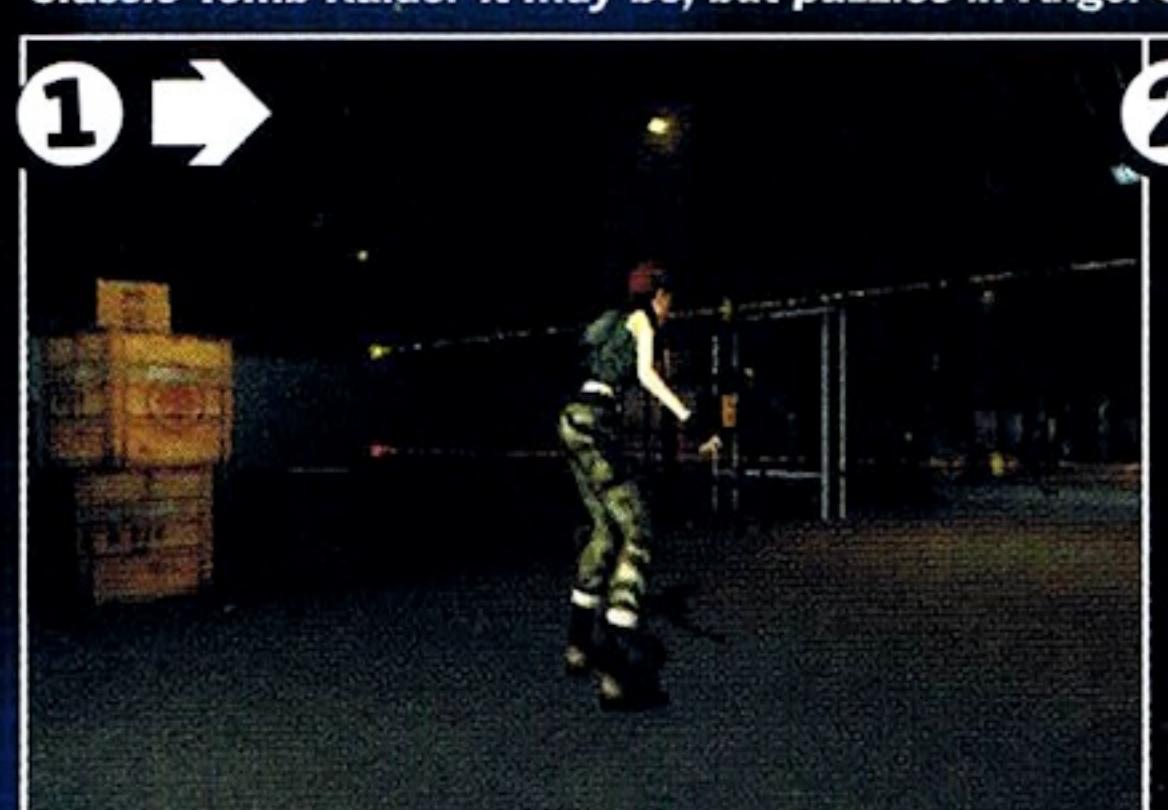


■ **STITCH THIS** Lady Lara is no longer shy about using her fists to tackle enemies.

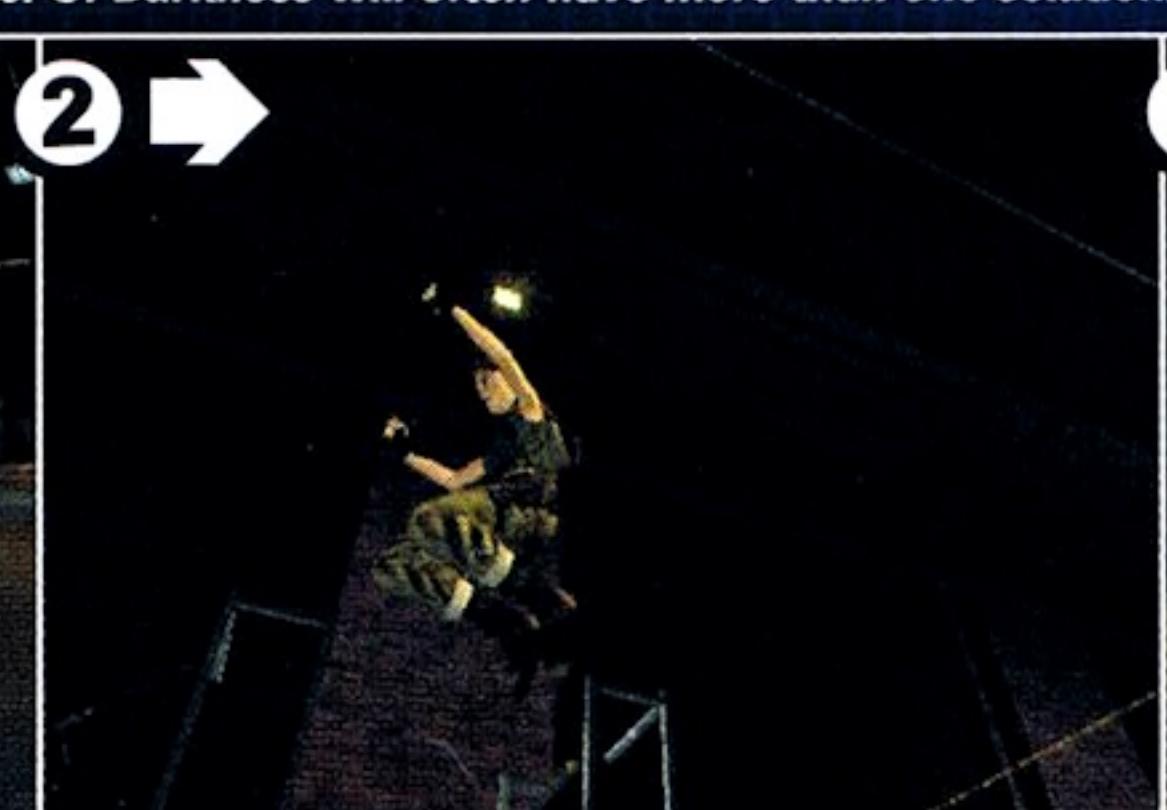


THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT

Classic Tomb Raider it may be, but puzzles in Angel Of Darkness will often have more than one solution.



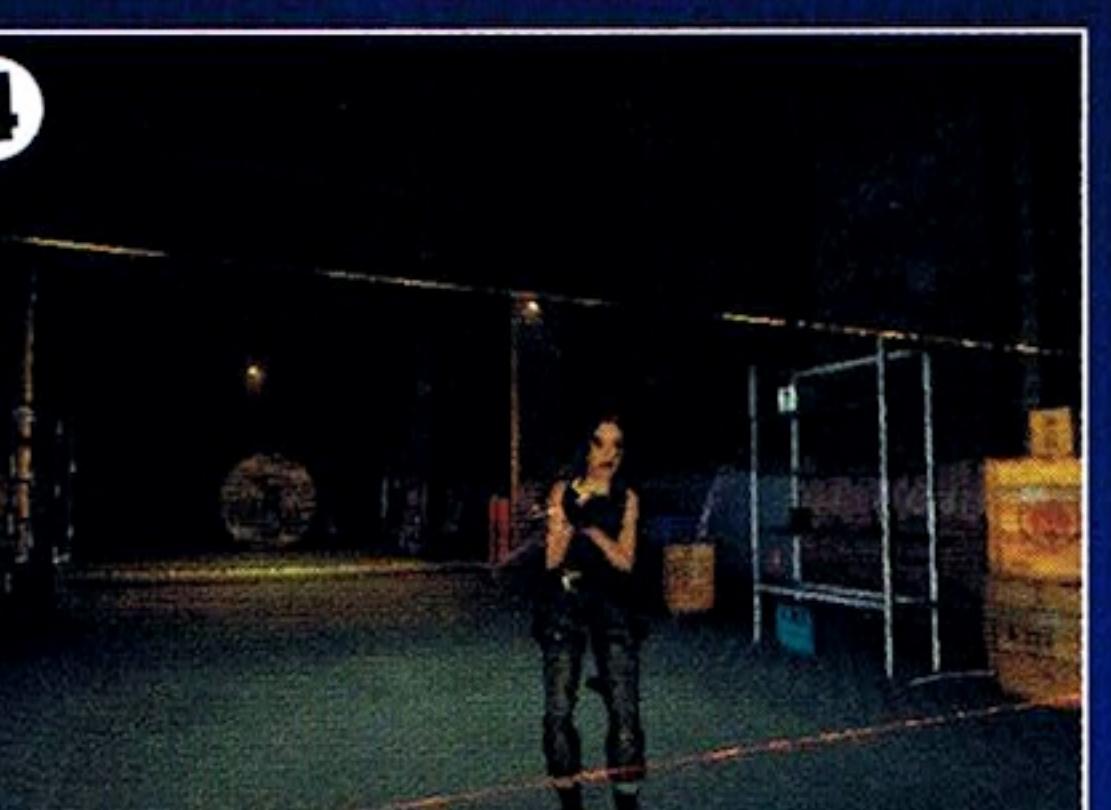
Aha! The old 'lasers across the corridor triggering bouncing proximity mines' trick. Well, there's only one thing for it – time to put Lara into platforming mode.



First we leap over the single beams in spectacular style, taking extra care to avoid all those lasers.



Then we stealth crawl under the others. It's not an easy task, but that's Tomb Raider for you, right?



But wait. See that drum behind you? Did you think to push that down the corridor, setting off all the mines? And let's not get into disabling the electrics in the control room...

monitor

ON LOCATION



NAME **The Hobbit**
 PUBLISHER **Vivendi**
 DEVELOPER **Inevitable**
 WEB SITE www.inevitable.com/hobbit.htm
 RELEASE **TBA**

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

■ **STICKY SITUATION**
 The staff is useful both in combat and when spanning gaps.

■ **IT'S GOT THE LOOK**
 In-game cinematics, plus a handful of high-quality CG sequences will help bring the story to life. All-important encounters such as facing the trolls, or dealing with Smaug are looking authentic.

■ **BEYOND THE CALL** A horde of side-quests give you a reason to explore Middle-Earth's locations further than Bilbo did in the book.



■ **GET STONED!** Once the sun's up, he's sure to be out of it.

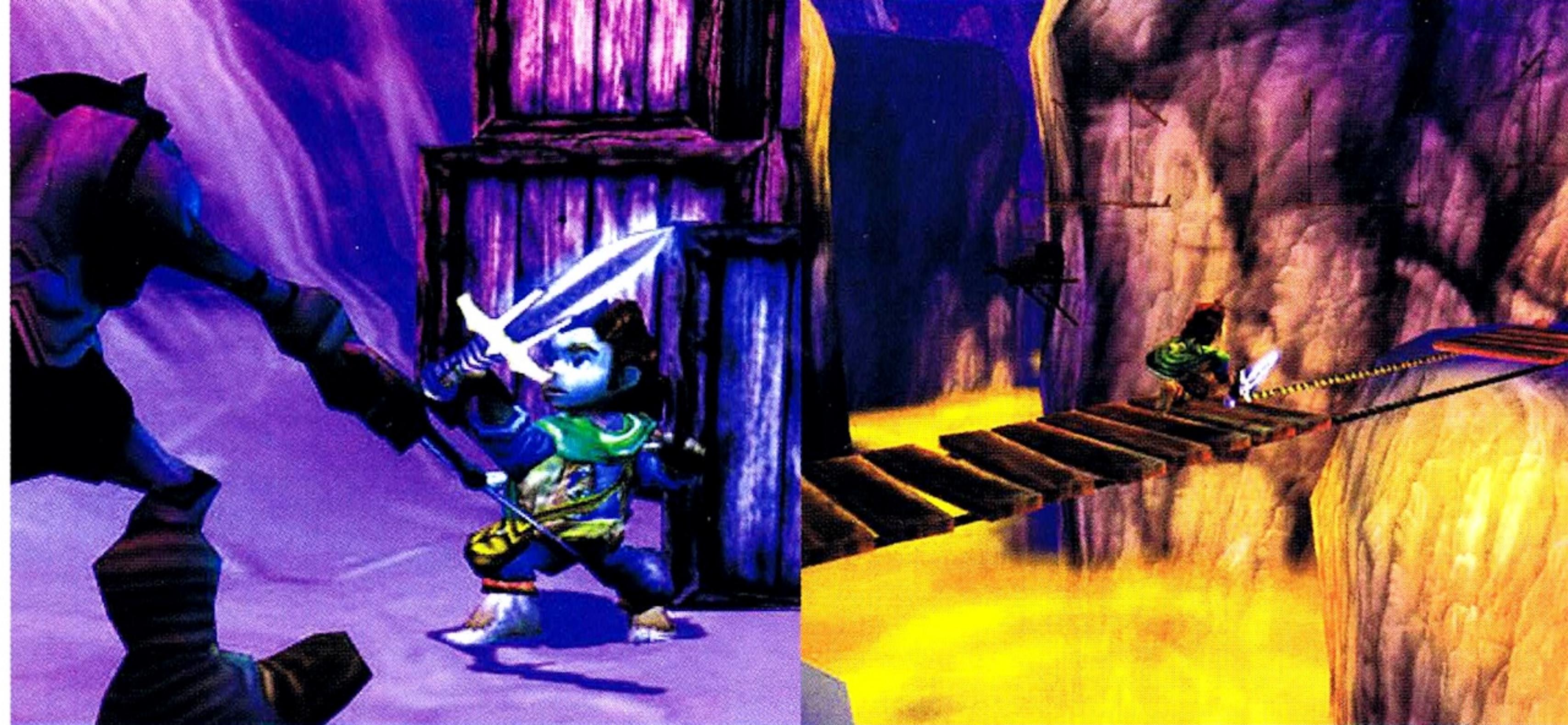
■ **THAT STINGS** Bilbo does budget appendix removal operations.



■ **HUGE & HAIRY** Where's that +5 Can of Bayon again?



■ **SWING AND MISS** Timing is the key to combat.



THE HOBBIT

Bored of Rings? This Tolkien tale may stoke your fire.

WHY DOES THIS LOOK STRANGELY LIKE A

NINTENDO GAME? For more reasons than one. *The Hobbit* had been touted as a Nintendo-only project until just recently, but when we spoke to the publisher we learned that it had planned to release the game on all formats from the beginning, and that the Gamecube version was just the one that was shown off the most.

The other reason this may look like a Nintendo title is that *The Hobbit* bears more than a little similarity to the *Zelda* games. There's something about controlling a diminutive chap with cartoon-style character design through a colourful fantasy adventure that makes avoiding such a comparison impossible. Tolkien's prelude to *The Lord of the Rings* was intended as a far more light-hearted affair and the game appears to be following suit.

SO THIS ISN'T LIKE LORD OF THE RINGS:

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING THEN? In a few ways it is, but only in that it provides some scenarios that weren't there in the book, while still covering all the key encounters in the storyline. All the major characters from the book are present; Gandalf, Thorin Oakenshield and his band of dwarves, Smaug the Golden, Bard, Gollum and more appear, but the player sees out the adventure as the hobbit Bilbo Baggins. Looking at the work in progress, it would be fair to say that the developer has been concentrating on a *Zelda*-style game that plays well in its own right, using Tolkien's classic to provide a great storyline, without trying too hard to appease hardcore literature purists.

SO WHAT CAN BILBO DO? Combat uses the tried and

tested lock-on system, with a walking stick, throwing stones and the elvish blade Sting being the weapons of choice. The walking stick doubles as a pole vault, allowing Bilbo to jump lengthy gaps in the terrain. The Ring plays a different role in *The Hobbit*, serving more as a stealth tool with a limited duration invisibility effect, rather than the root of all evil as it is in *The Lord of the Rings*. Standard platform game moves are present, such as jumping, shimmying and the like. It's not just a string of total *Zelda* rip-offs though. Some thoughtful touches were already in place at this early stage. The ever annoying 'jump from rope to rope' scenario is made intuitive by having Bilbo reach for the next rope only when he is lined up correctly. A minor point, but with decent production values and thoughtful touches shining through at this early stage, our expectations are high. □ DT

OPINION

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA

THE HOBBIT may not smack of originality, borrowing more than a few elements of Nintendo's classic *Zelda* series, but at least it's already showing more promise than the hugely disappointing *Fellowship of the Ring*. Worth keeping an eye out for.

WHAT WE WANT

For all these nifty game elements to come together as cohesively as they appear they could.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID

TEPID

WARM

HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN

WHAT YOU WANT

M. Andrews is looking for "something with a real Tolkien feel to it, not just a game."

WHAT THEY WANT

To deliver an adventure set in Tolkien's universe that doesn't suck harder than a Hoover.



monitor

HANDS-ON



NAME:

Wakeboarding Unleashed:
featuring Shaun Murray

PUBLISHER:

Activision

DEVELOPER:

Shaba Games

WEB SITE:

www.activisiono2.com/murray

RELEASE:

June

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%



SWITCH TWEAKED MUTE FROM 9-1-1

2.5 x 2300

TWO'S COMPANY
Watch out for the two player options that feature not only the usual Trick Attack and Horse modes, but also a wakeboarding version of Tug of War and a Co-op mode where one player boards and the other drives the boat.

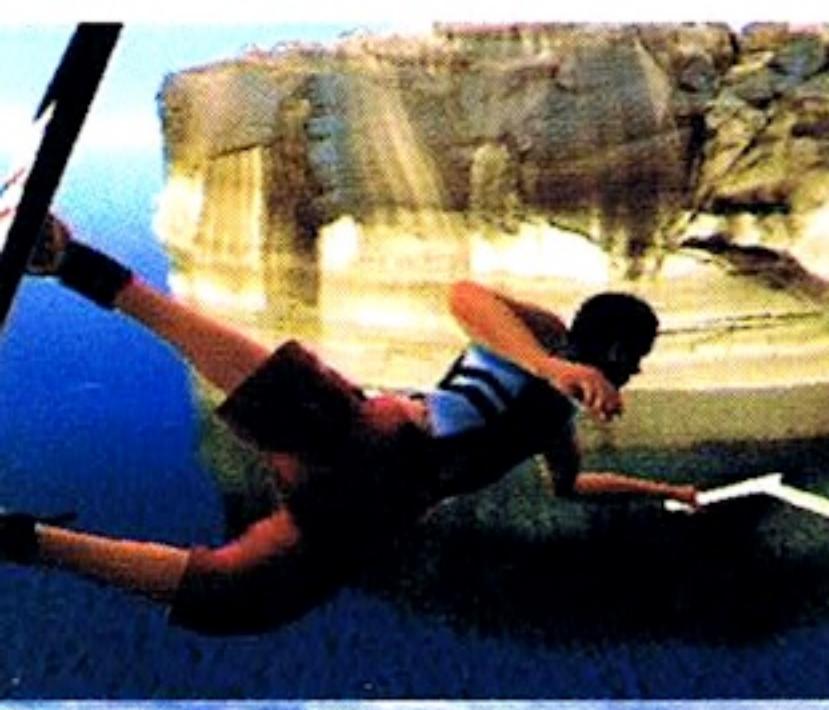


GATOR-AID Watch out for alligators in the swamp levels.



WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED: FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY

Life jackets required as psychotic wakeboarding readies to splashdown on PS2.



BACKSIDE BOARDSLIDE TO RALEY

DEAF AND MUTE
Mutes and other skating tricks make an appearance.



3600OSMOSIS

ISN'T THAT TONY HAWK ON WATER? Brought to us by the highly decorated Activision O2 Sports label, Wakeboarding Unleashed is an over the top aquatic game of acrobatics, strung together with a buffet of tricks, spins, flips and head smashing mishaps. While hurtling through a water course laden with jumps and other obstacles, players have access to three basic types of moves; invert moves for when you're thrown into the air off a hard wake, grab moves for mid-air tomfoolery and the staple slide moves for riding rails.

WHERE WE WILL BE RACING Where won't you?

Unleashed features eleven water courses for players to pollute with arrogant style and reckless abandon. They include the Belize, a river through a green and overly vegetated rainforest, an Ocean World theme park course straddled by tempting half-pipes, and the Bayou, a murky river complete with hicks, Jimbobs and Betty Sues fishing from daggie dingys. In true Tony Hawk style there's a host of objectives to complete, including knocking the previously mentioned rednecks out of their boats and into the leech infested waters, performing drawn out spark inducing rail slides and leaping gaps in the track.

IS IT POSTCARDESQUE? Yes it is. Wakeboarding

Unleashed has the most impressive water effects on PS2. The reflection of each course can be seen in the game's wide open waters as you ride over the top and shred it to pieces. Eddies and sways become jump ramps and the wake behind your boat moves and warps realistically, allowing the major air necessary to pull such moves as the Tweaked Roastbeef and the Flying Squirrel Air. Over the top definitely, but also inviting. □ JE

OPINION

PlayStation 2

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED: FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY might be too similar to *Tony Hawk* for some, but fans of the sport will be having too much wet-and-wild wake rocketing fun to care. And the water effects look brilliant.

WHAT WE WANT

The frame-rate to be fixed up in the two player mode, and more than one boat driving around to tow off.

WHAT YOU WANT

Fat Boy Fung hopes "the game will include a macabre and sickly collection of fall animations."

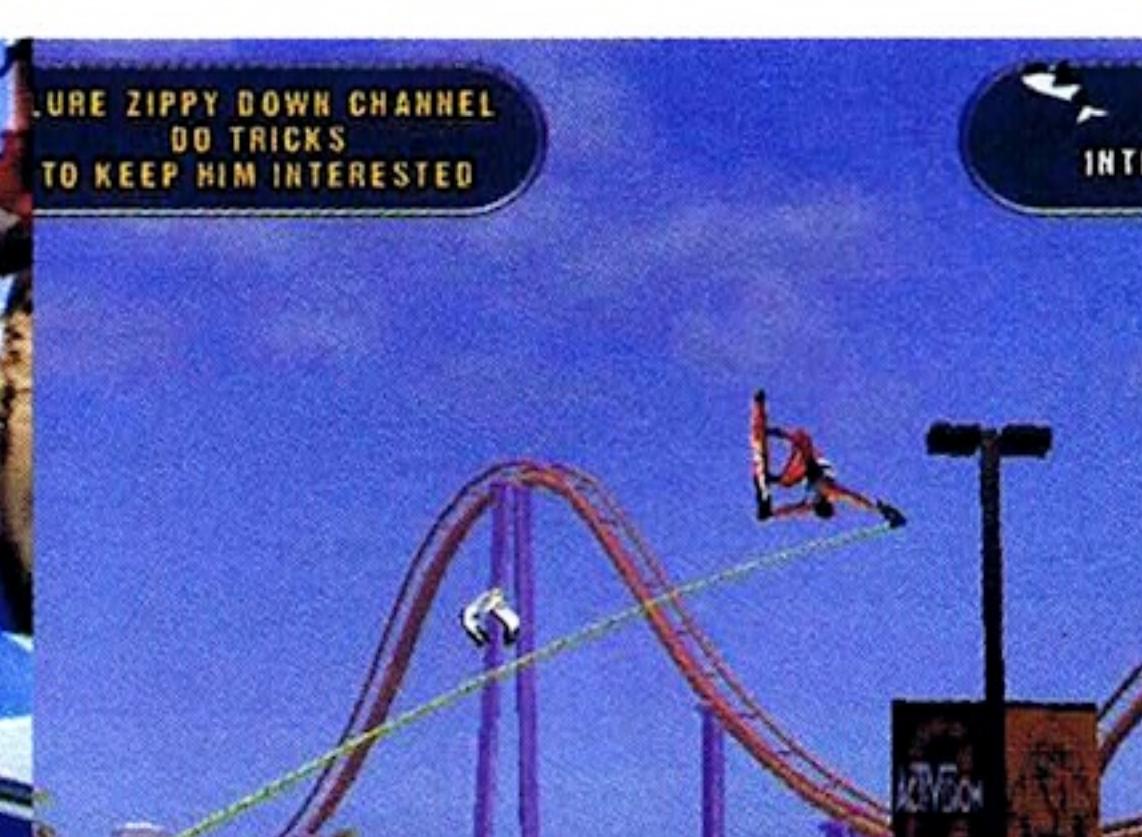
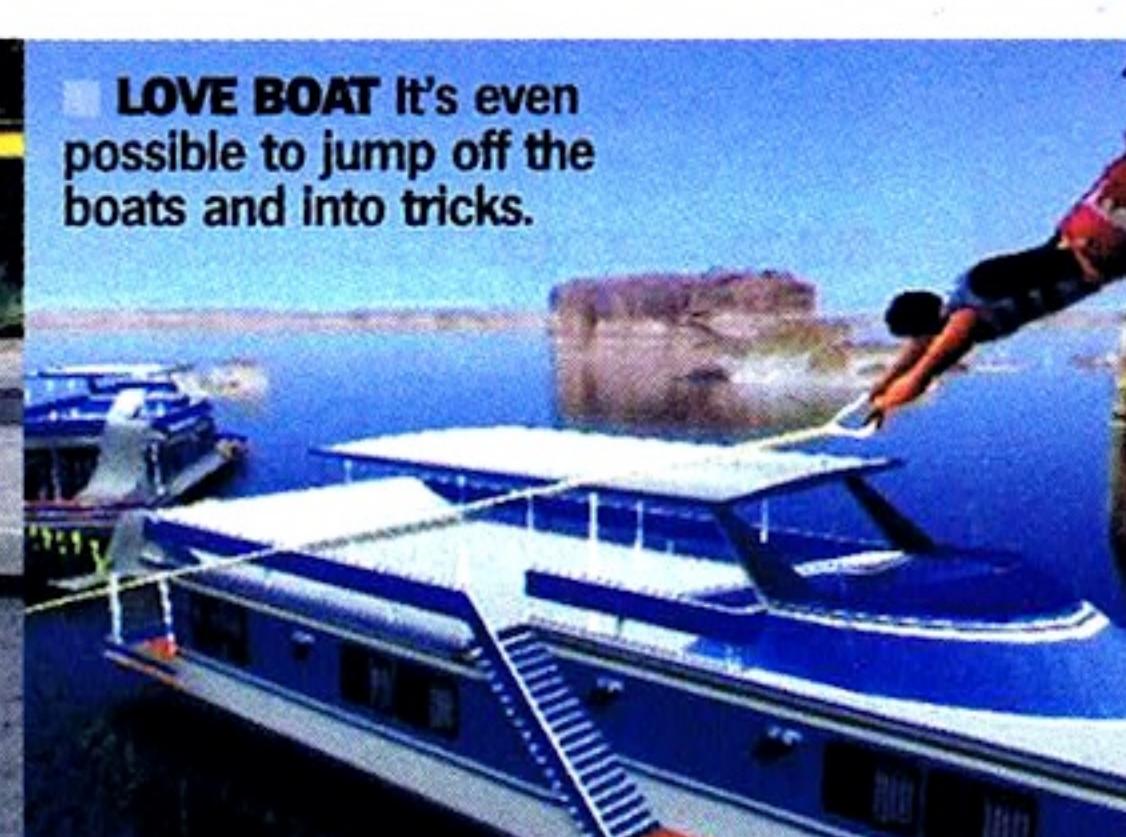
WHAT THEY WANT

To deliver an exhilarating rendition of wakeboarding with tricks that would cripple in real life.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIDGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

LOVE BOAT It's even possible to jump off the boats and into tricks.





MOVING VIOLATIONS

Each wrestler has transport matching their persona. The American Badass roars around on a souped-up hog, the Samoan sumo Rikishi backs 'dat ass up in a steam roller and Stone Cold tears up the terrain in a beastly 4x4, complete with kegs of Steveweiser in the back.

GOODNESS GRACIOUS
Great wheels of fire!



ROAD RAGE If only our cars came with rocket launchers.



WWE CRUSH HOUR

Leaving a bigger trail of destruction than Stone Cold fleeing the cops...

SUPERSTARS IN MUSCLE CARS? There's always been a link between the WWE and monster trucks. With vehicles already named after Austin, The Undertaker and The Rock, it was a natural progression to take WWE onto the road, get the wrestlers some wheels and let them duel to the death in vehicular combat. What?

ENOUGH STONE COLD IMPRESSIONS... WHAT'S IT LIKE? All confusion set aside, WWE Crush Hour is good, mindless fun. It plays a lot like Twisted Metal Black, with each superstar motoring about in tricked-up, machine-gun-toting automobiles. Each 'match' begins complete with entrance music and Titantron videos. As your wrestler's vehicle does burnouts down the ramp, Howard 'The Fink' Finkel announces their arrival. Victory is attained either by elimination, or by the most wrecks within a given time limit, which can lead to some intense white-knuckle action. To maximise the carnage, it's vital to beat your opponents to the good power-ups, like missiles, mines and invincibility.

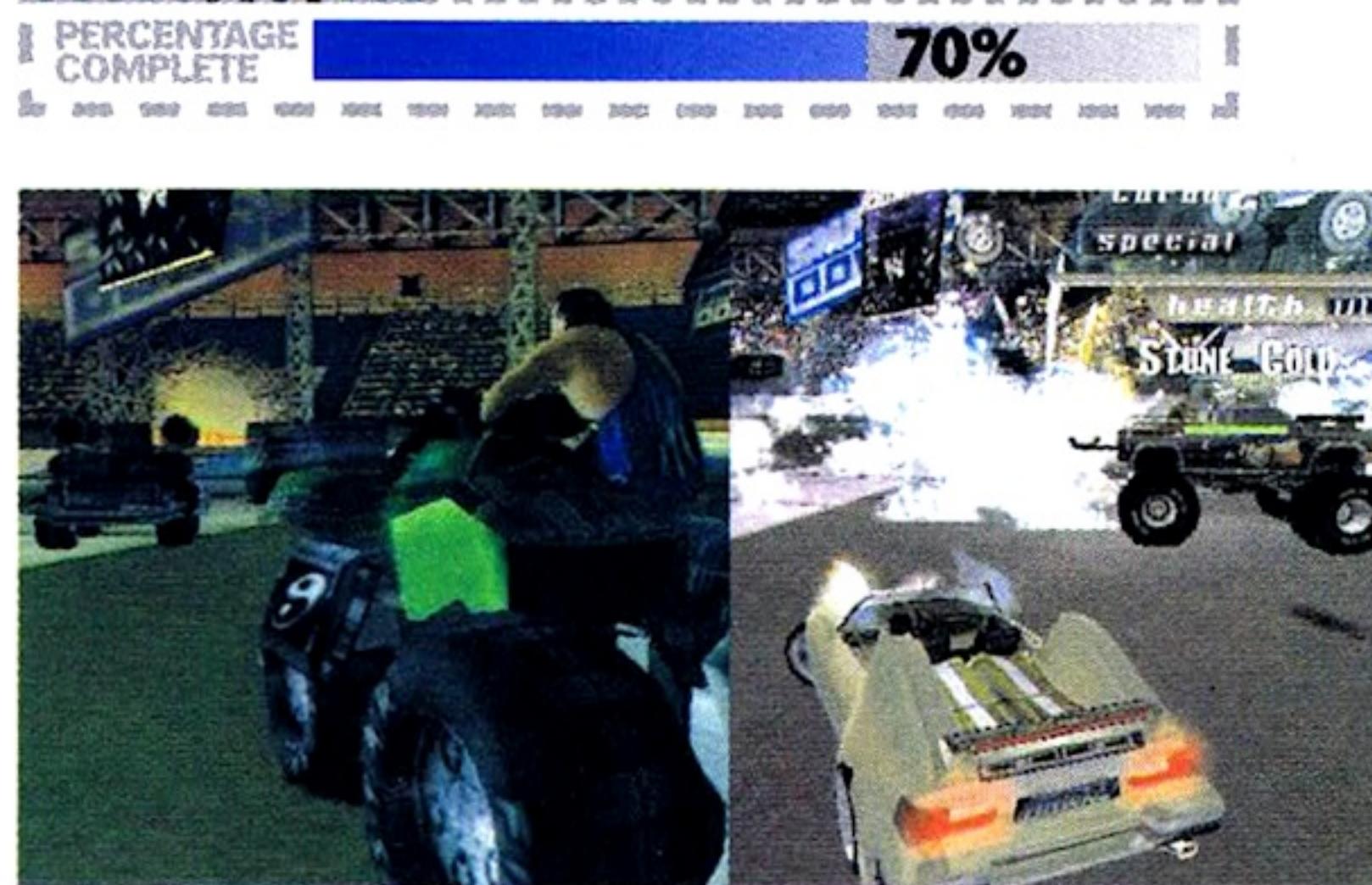
WHERE DOES THE CARNAGE TAKE PLACE? The Staples Centre? The stadium-style arenas that the action takes place in are loosely based on aspects of wrestling. There are stages based on Raw and

monitor

HANDS-ON



NAME WWE Crush Hour
PUBLISHER THQ
DEVELOPER Pacific Coast Power and Light
WEBSITE www.thq.com/games/46020/
RELEASE April



70%

SmackDown, and the Hell in a Cell stage (one of the cooler ones) starts with all players in a tight, confined space with very few power-ups.

CAN YOU DIG IT, SUCKA? The only issue with Crush Hour, at this stage, is some out-dated speech. Every time a wrestler scores a wreck, they spout a witty one liner, but it's a line they would have used about a year ago. With any luck, they'll update the speech, as they have with the vehicles. □ Nick O'Shea

OPINION

PlayStation 2

WWE CRUSH HOUR may not be looking like a must-have title at this stage, but if commentary by good ol' Jim Ross is added and it's released at a budget price tag, the game should make for a thoroughly enjoyable party game.

WHAT WE WANT

- Some hardcore vehicular combat with the WWE attitude.

WHAT YOU WANT

- Forum-goer Hellraiser 3:16 wants 'The Undertaker to have his trademark Harley.' You're in luck!

WHAT THEY WANT

- To sell more copies of Crush Hour than The Rock's new line of merchandise.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID

TEPID

WARM

HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN



SHOW GHOST SHIP They used leftover special effects from the movie.



NAME Judge Dredd: Dredd Vs Death
 PUBLISHER Vivendi
 DEVELOPER Rebellion
 WEB SITE www.2000adonline.com
 RELEASE TBA

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

65%



■ POSTER BOY Dredd's fame as a hard man of the law precedes him.



■ DREDD CALM Another perp bagged for the big-shouldered badass.

■ JUDGE AND JURY You can clean up these mean streets as you go.

■ DREDD IN THE WATER The weather effects could add different challenges on the streets.

JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH

Buffing the helmet of the hardest lawman in Mega City One.

THAT'S SOME OUTFIT. WHO'S HIS TAILOR?

Mock ye not. This is the first proper glimpse we've had of the virtual Joe Dredd, protector of the post-apocalyptic domed metropolis Mega City One. As you can see, he looks pretty stylish in his Justice Department knee pads and armour plating. That gun's no peashooter either. There's no sign of his nemeses yet, the Dark Judges – Death, Fear, Fire and Mortis – but Dredd himself seems to be a hybrid of the many graphic artists who've lent their style and vision to the big man over the years.

IS THIS REAL IN-GAME FOOTAGE OF DREDD?

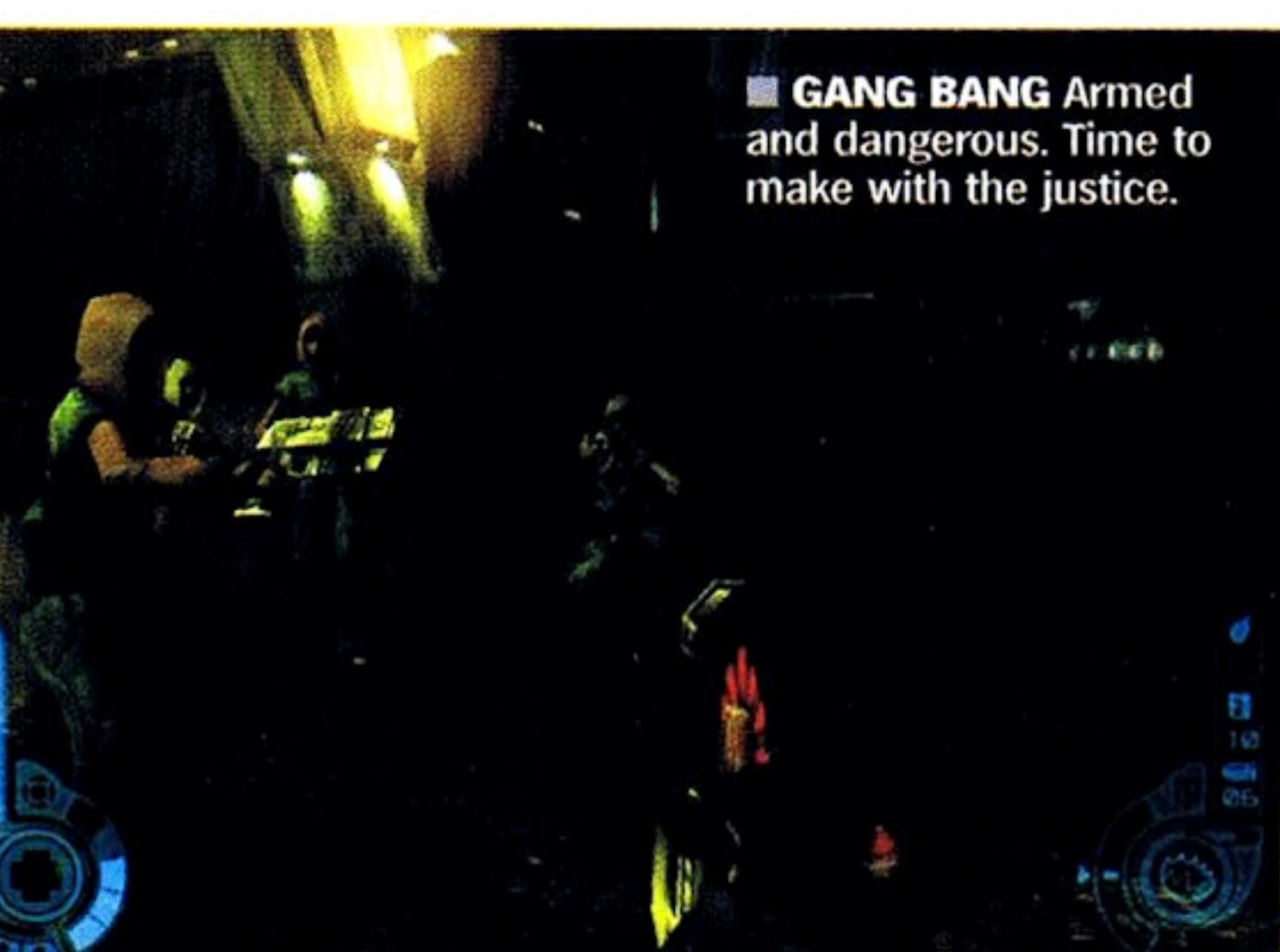
Sure is. The sprawling sci-fi metropolis previously revealed by OPS2 is now populated by more than just perps. And the screens here indicate that you can take down criminals as you wander around the city, trussing them up for anything from caffeine abuse to murder. The best rule of thumb is to assume that the majority of people are guilty of something, and that gangs and death cultists are mingling with regular citizens. However, you must be careful as you mete out your yellow-booted justice from behind your gun because you're subject to the same laws, and will be sent down if you're a little too overzealous.

SO YOU PLAY AS A FIRST-PERSON DREDD?

Oh, yes! Below you'll find some of the very first screens of the view behind the Lawgiver gun. This weapon comes complete with a venomous variety of ammunition including Ricochet, Heat Seeking, Hi-Ex(plosive), Armour Piercing, Incendiary and Stun Shot. Phew, so many ways to rid the streets of criminal scum. The variety will add a strategy element to combat in Mega City One's enclosed spaces. Hi-Ex sounds like a winner – we can't wait to find out for sure. □ MW



■ COMMUNITY SERVICE Keep an eye on your prisoners.



■ GANG BANG Armed and dangerous. Time to make with the justice.



■ BOOM TOWN Hi-Ex rounds are a useful and impressive inclusion.

OPINION

PlayStation 2



DREDD VS DEATH is unveiled, and it's a relief to see it looking so good. It'll be a while before we can actually take to the streets of Mega City One for a playtest, but it's time to start getting excited.

Funkymonkey: I'm looking for an immersive FPS with the graphics that reflect the comic to full capacity.
 judgeRABBI: Nice crisp graphics please! No blurry crap, Rebellion! Keep it the same level as the PC version.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIDGID TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



G 8+
TEEN

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PlayStation® 2



SEGA®

THE PARTY PLACE

THE GROOVE PLACE

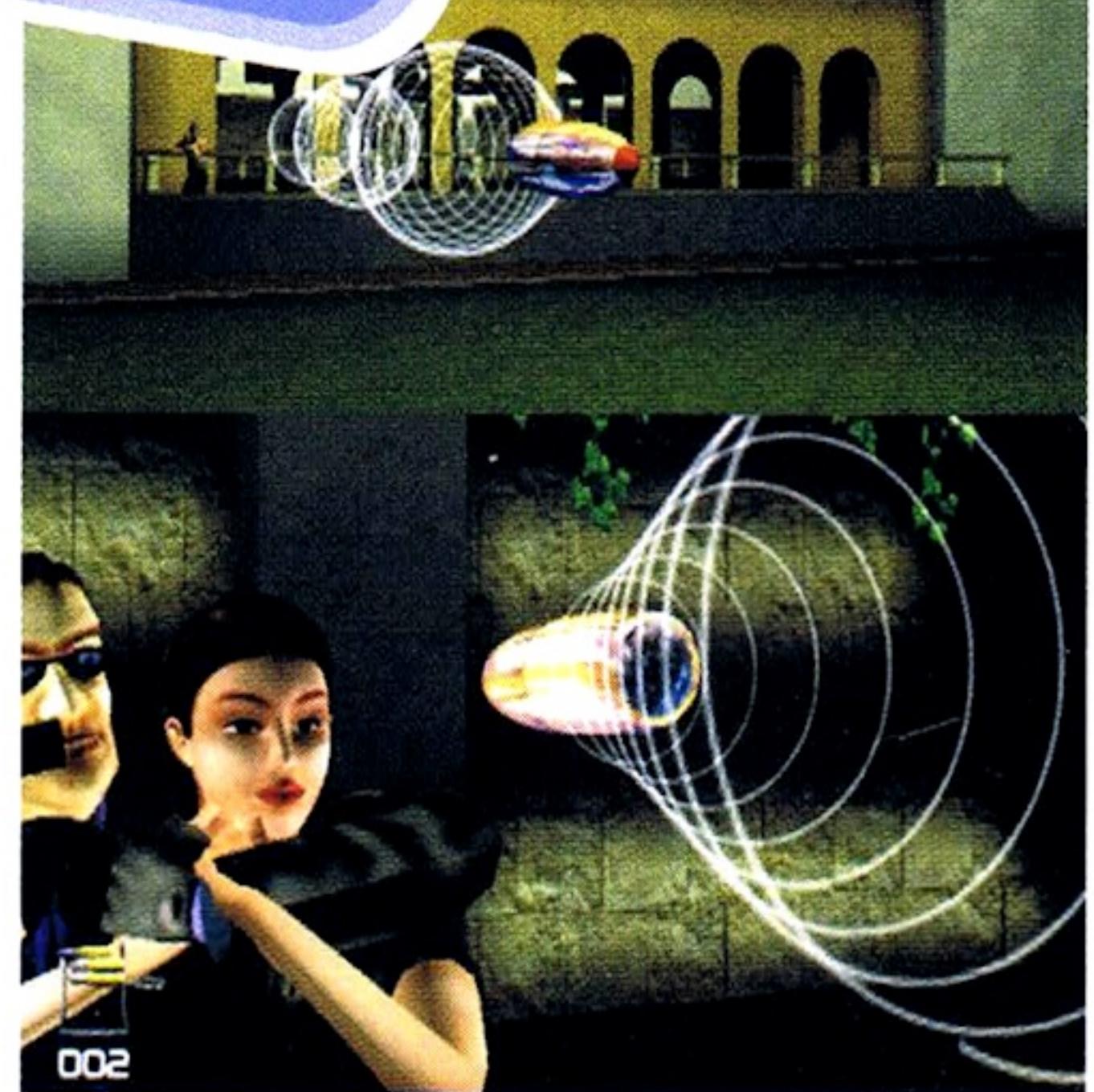
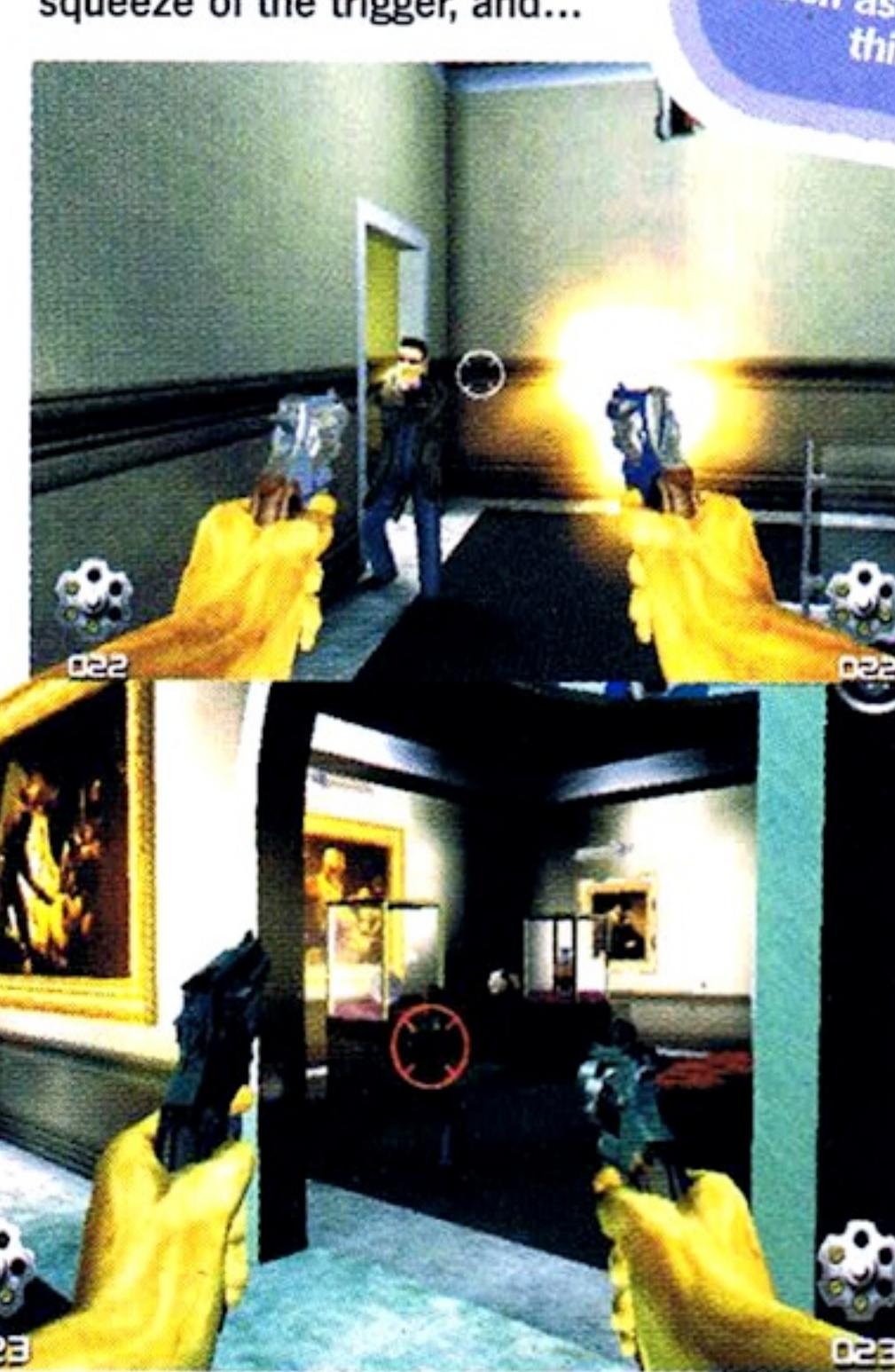
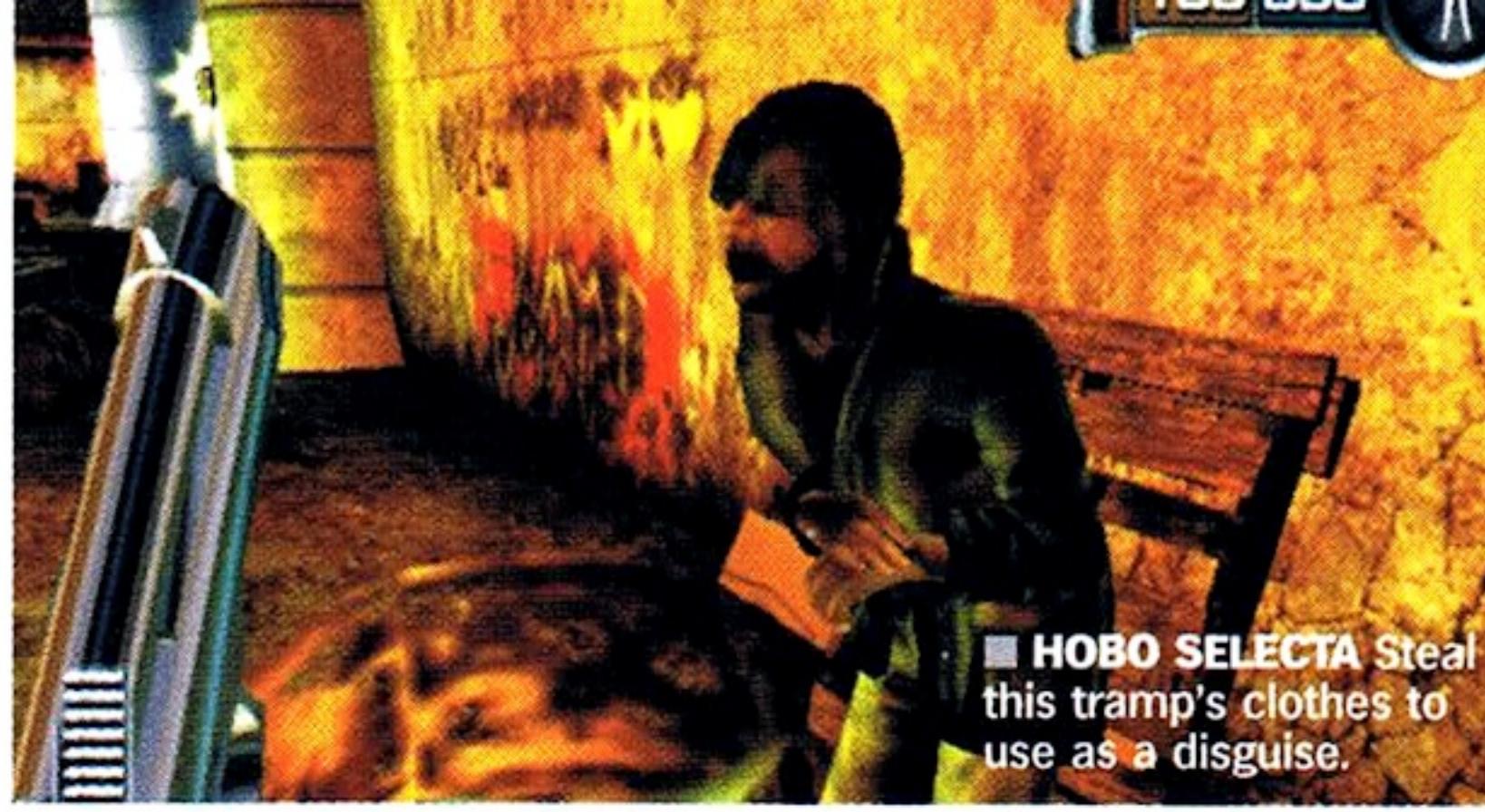
THE THIRD PLACE



NAME Die Hard Vendetta
PUBLISHER Vivendi
DEVELOPER Bits Studio
WEB SITE www.diehardvendetta.com
RELEASE May

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%



DIE HARD VENDETTA

McClane's having another really bad day. OPS2 goes through the wringer with him.

IS MCCLANE GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS SH*T?

Brucie might have filled out a bit and gone all M Night Shyamalan in recent years, but the videogame incarnation of his finest hour (besides *Moonlighting*, natch) is leaner and meaner than ever. It's his daughter Lucy's first day as a cop with the LAPD and she's been kidnapped by terrorists led by Piet Gruber. Hmm, Gruber. Where have we heard that name before? Cue McClane rushing to the scene minus a shirt, but with a freshly ironed batch of whupass.

SO IS IT ROCK HARD OR A BIT CRAP? Just like the movies, *Vendetta* sets the scene with minimum fuss. After a brief chat with Twinkie-munching/child-murdering cop, Al Powell, you're steaming through the art museum with a pair of chattering 9mm's and a fist full of one-liners. The graphics are solid enough but fine detail has been compromised in favour of speed at times. We grab an unwitting goon hostage-style – because we can – but frankly, there's too much fun to be had greasing scumbags to pussyfoot around. McClane? Stealth? Yippee-no-way, mofo!

HEY, SPRECHEN ZE MULTIPLAYER? Ja. The promised four-player deathmatches weren't available when we

got our hands on the code, but the two-player games were fully up and running. You'll be able to shoot up a nice mixture of levels from the game's locations, as well as areas like *Die Hard's* Nakatomi Tower building. We didn't see an option to fill the levels with bots, which is a shame, but the weapons were plentiful and frags came thick and fast. Perhaps we're not looking at a classic first-person shooter, but *Vendetta* is already playing like a perfect companion to McClane's big screen adventures. □ PF



OPINION PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA

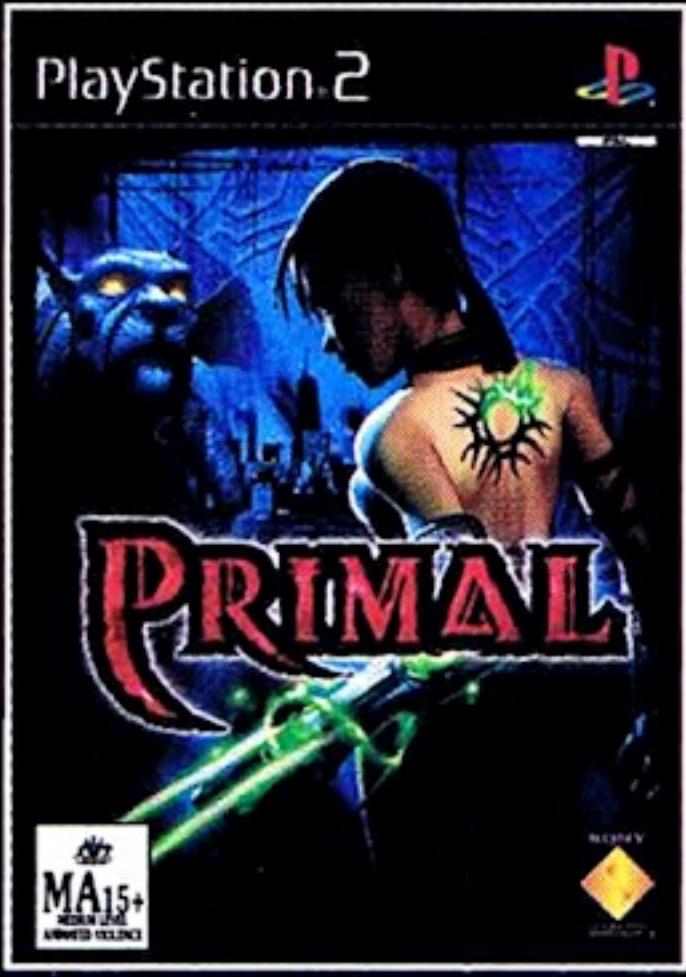
DIE HARD VENDETTA may not be the sharpest looking game, but it's fast and captures the spirit of the movies to a tee. It's about time we had a brash FPS with a likeable, wise-cracking hero.

gms: I can't wait to kick terrorist ass! Yippee ki yay!
FunkyMonkey: I want a full-on shoot 'em up with all the wisecracks of the film.

HOT OR NOT?

FRIGID	TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN
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www.primalgame.com

DISCOVER YOUR PRIMAL SIDE

With four demon forms to experience and four demon realms to explore, Primal is the perfect way to discover your dark side. In the guise of streetwise rock-chick Jen, Primal takes you on a demon-slaying adventure to restore the balance between order and chaos in a gaming experience that's totally out of this world.

PlayStation 2 THE DEMONIC PLACE THE IMMORTAL PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

MORTAL KOMBAT BLOKE!

ED BOON

Trading bloody blows with the Producer of *Mortal Kombat*.

The MK series has built itself on shock factor and grisly fatalities. Is this the main attraction of MK:DA?

Gore and guts isn't such a major factor as it once was. Since the original, there's been more shocking content in other games than that seen in MK. We've tried to focus more on the fighting mechanics. That, and introducing the multiple fighting styles and weapons.

You've introduced new characters, too. How difficult was it to decide who to include in the finished article?

It's always hard because we have nearly forty existing characters. At some point we have to decide who makes the cut and, at the same time, introduce as many new characters as possible. Our big decision was to kill off Liu Kang which, y'know, was like killing off Luke Skywalker!

"KILLING OFF LIU KANG WAS LIKE KILLING OFF LUKE SKYWALKER!"

How closely did you research the different fighting styles?

Very extensively. Two designers on the team – Carl Spacina and Nigel Kacey – ordered videos and did a lot of internet research of over sixty fighting styles. They tried to take the best components of each and distribute them amongst the characters. We wanted to make them as different as possible in order to ensure there was enough variety.

How do you think MK compares to other beat-'em-ups on the market?

Games like Tekken 4 are more like fighting 'simulators' with human movements and human abilities, whereas we lean more towards the supernatural. Plus nobody can bleed as much blood as we have in our games. That separates us and gives us our own kind of niche – we're really trying to go to the extreme.

What weren't you able to include in MK:DA that you'd have liked to?

I personally would want to see damage on whole bodies, torn clothing and more sophisticated presentation – camera cuts, dramatic theatrical staging, maybe even synching the music with the fighting.

Any future plans to put MK online?

The idea of having worldwide tournaments where you can fight online and become

the greatest fighter in the world is very appealing. The only problem is getting a connection that is fast enough because of the sensitivity of the subject matter – it's such a twitch-related game. If there is any lag in a fighting game then you're gonna really feel it.

How surprised are you that the game reached a million sales in the United States so quickly?

We were always pretty positive that the game would eventually sell a respectable number of games, but we never guessed it would pass a million units so fast. Now the question everyone is asking is, "How long before we cross the two million mark?"

So how's the beard coming along?

What beard? □ GW



DEADLY COMPLIANCE

Mr Boon slowly dissects our questions and reveals all... except his age, that is.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Ed Boon
Job title: Producer
Nationality: American
Date of birth: 22/02/classified

Selected Gameography:
1993 *Mortal Kombat* (Arcade, SNES, PC, Game Boy, more)
1994 *Mortal Kombat 2* (Arcade, SNES, PC, Game Boy, more)
1995 *Mortal Kombat 3* (SNES, PSone, PC, Game Boy, more)
1999 *Mortal Kombat 4* (Arcade, PSone, Nintendo 64, PC)
2002 *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance* (PS2, Xbox, GameCube, more)

Hobbies: Videogames, golf, basketball, billiards, DVDs, tech toys

Favourite directors: Robert Zemeckis, James Cameron

Favourite author: Don't have any

Favourite bands: The Police, Queen, The Eagles, Rush

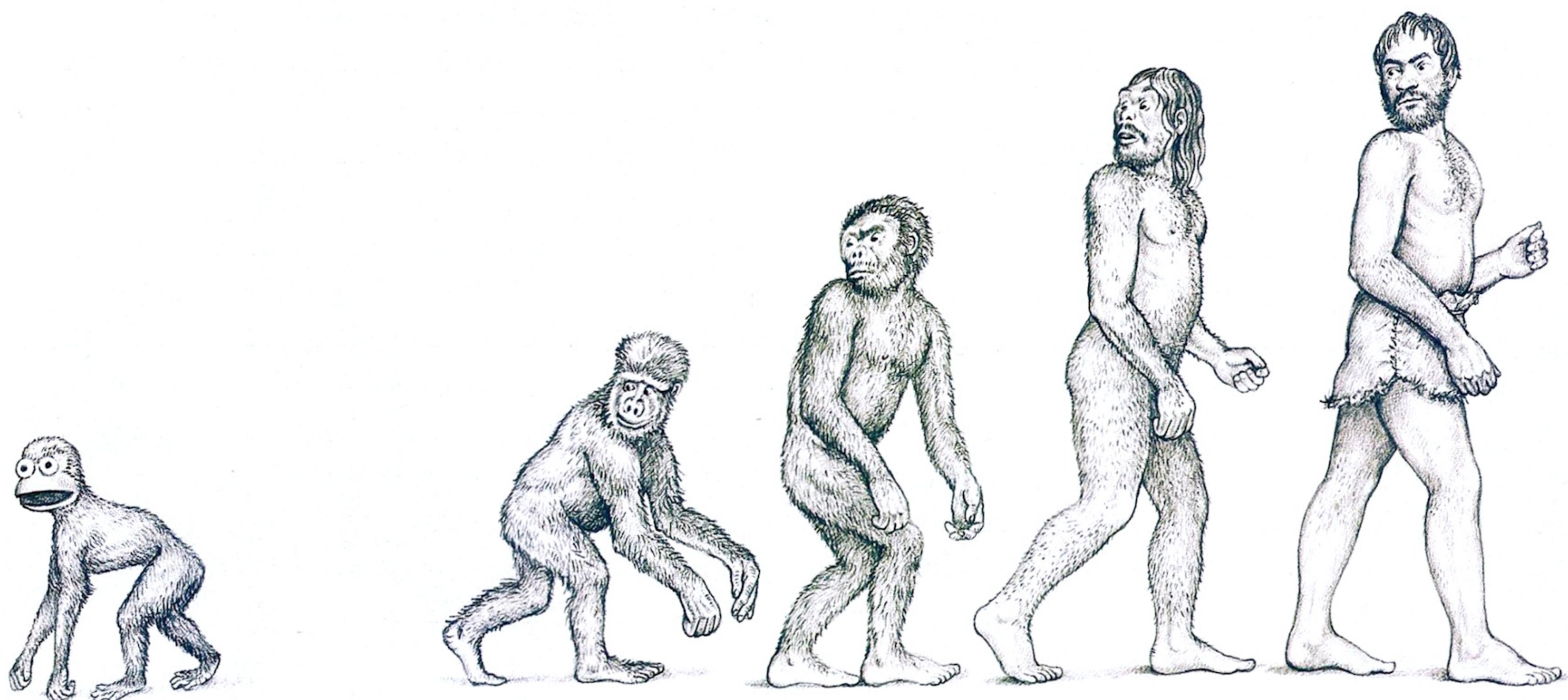
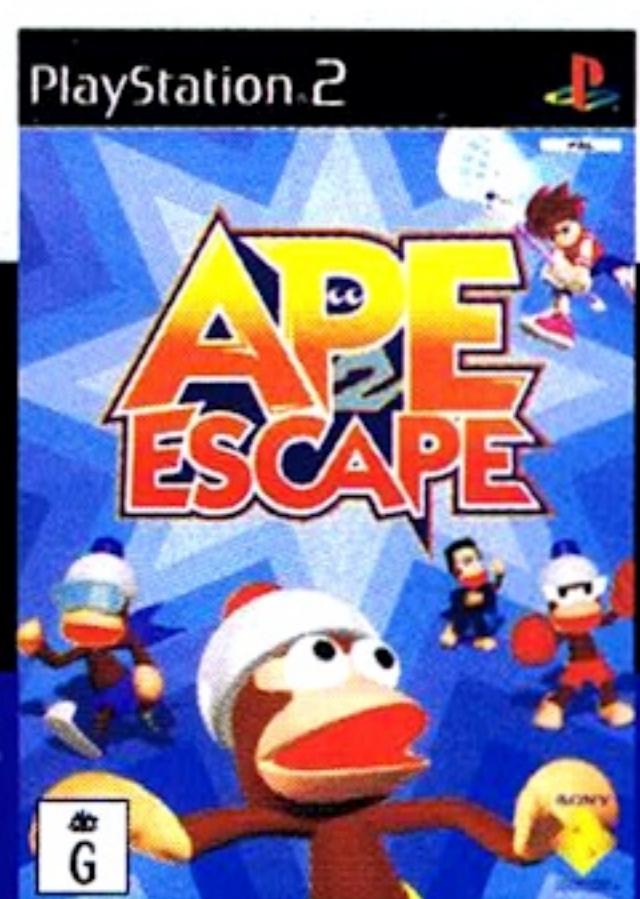


Fig 9. Evolution or Revolution.



Darwin may not approve but it's your job to stop the monkey mayhem as Ape Escape 2 debuts on PS2. An arsenal of weapons and gizmos should help you avoid all the banana skins on the twenty different levels. Ooh, ooh, go get 'em.

www.apeescape2.com www.au.playstation.com

PlayStation 2  THE FRANTIC PLACE THE HILARIOUS PLACE THE THIRD PLACE

LOADING...

It's a horrible thing waiting for something to load, or reload as it were, especially when it looks like it's going to be as hot as *Enter The Matrix*.



Movie licence games are starting to lose their reputation for being universally lame. This is in no small part thanks to games such as *Spider-Man* and *The Thing*, proving that games revolving around a licence can actually take what's good about the movie and run with it, rather than being a pale imitation of a blockbuster movie. Arguably, the bigger the film, the harder the task it is to deliver what the masses want. So how on earth do you go about creating a game that will do a movie like *The Matrix* justice? Well, it would appear that nobody had the answer back when Keanu and co. redefined modern motion picture sci-fi, but Dave Perry and his team at Shiny Entertainment look like they may be about to join the handful of developers who have the answer.

Actually, the answer is quite simple. Deliver the same sensation and experiences that the movie puts the viewer through. Put the player into the working reality of that universe, and make it work the way they understand it from the film. The real hurdle is finding a way to do this without just running the player through the movie's script, having it serve as a sort of playguide. Shiny have not only found a way to do this with their upcoming title *Enter The Matrix*, which launches on May 15 to

coincide with the premiere of *The Matrix Reloaded*, but they've even managed to do it without putting the player in the shoes of everyone's favourite cyber-himbo, Neo. This is not a game about the *Matrix* movie, but rather an official and unique part of the main *Matrix* storyline.

What is *Enter The Matrix*?

Of course, since none of us have seen the film just yet, many of you will have no idea what this game will focus on. However, there are some basic points about *The Matrix Reloaded* that we can reveal here without really spoiling things for anyone. While the main character of this sequel is once again Neo (Keanu Reeves), and other major characters like Morpheus and Trinity are back too, the Wachowski brothers (creators of *The Matrix*) introduce some new faces to join the ranks of the human rebels.

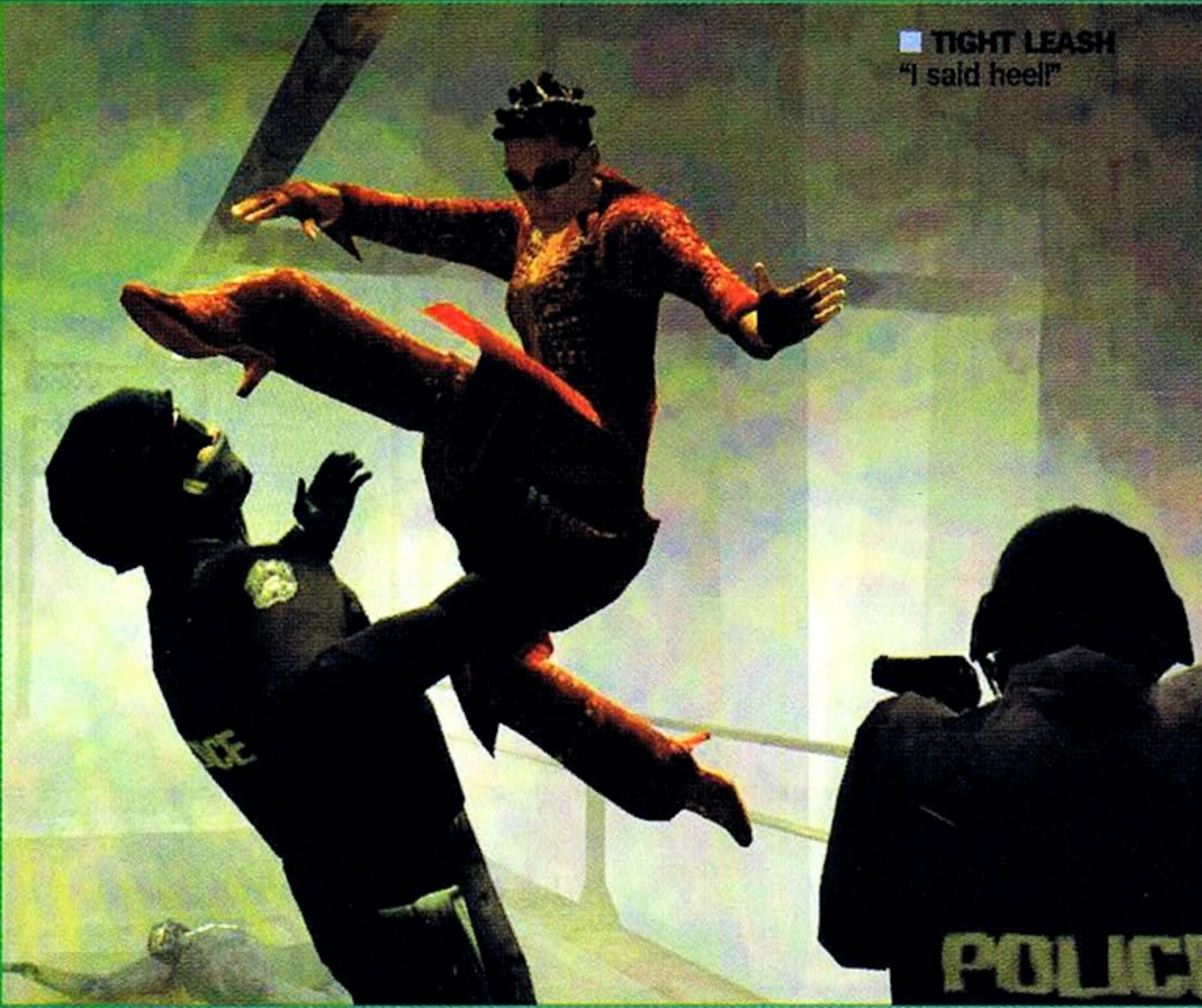
Ghost (Anthony Wong) is a weapons expert who has a mysterious history with Trinity. Niobe (Jada Pinkett Smith) has a somewhat different forte, being a crack pilot and a previous lover of Morpheus. These two new futuristic warriors are side characters in the new movie, but assume the two lead roles for *Enter The Matrix*. At the start of the game, the player must choose one character and stick with them as they play through the rest of the game.



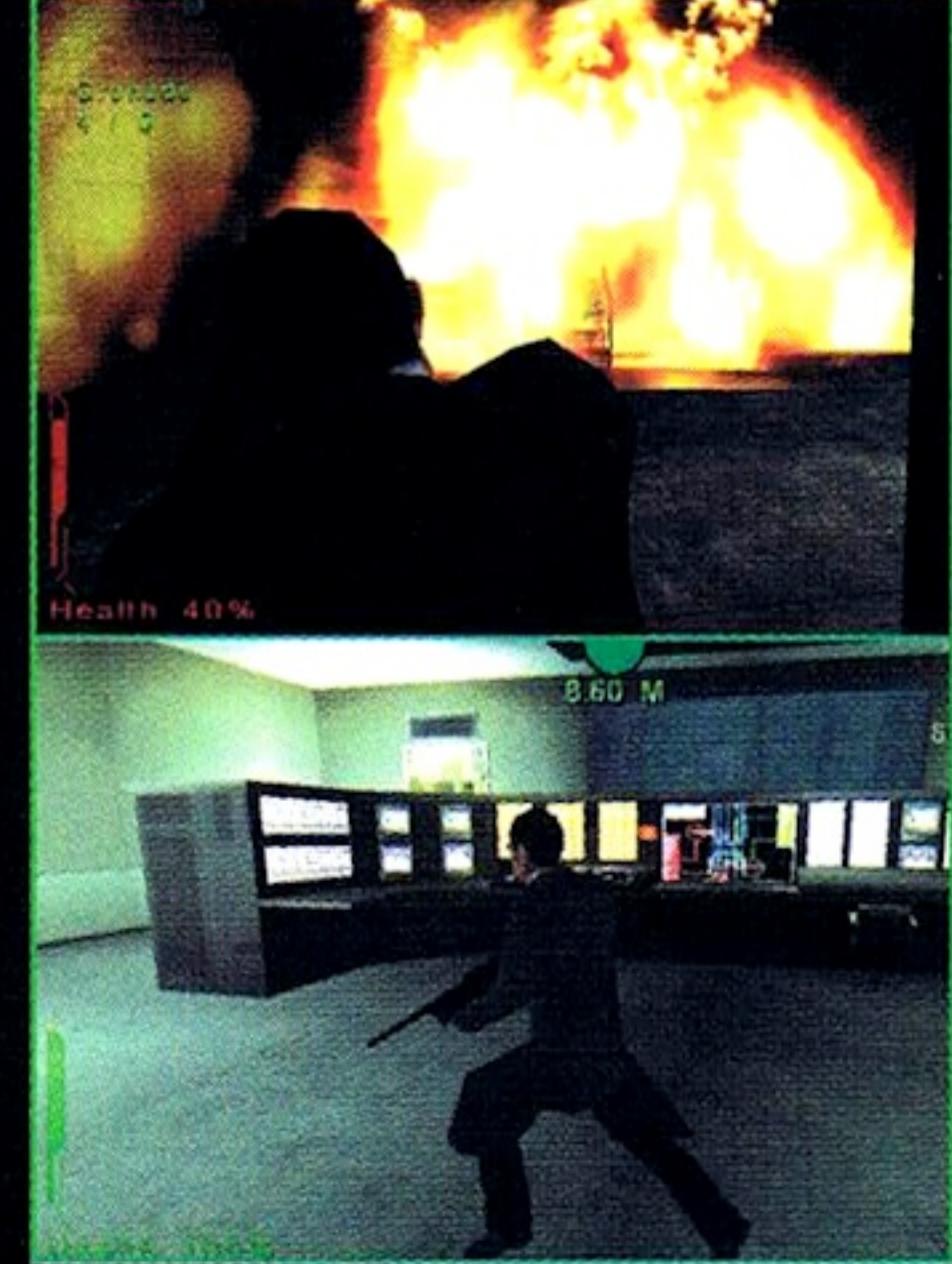
GIVING THE FINGER Just as painful as it looks.



GIRL POWER Niobe can swing with the best of them.



TIGHT LEASH
"I said heel!"

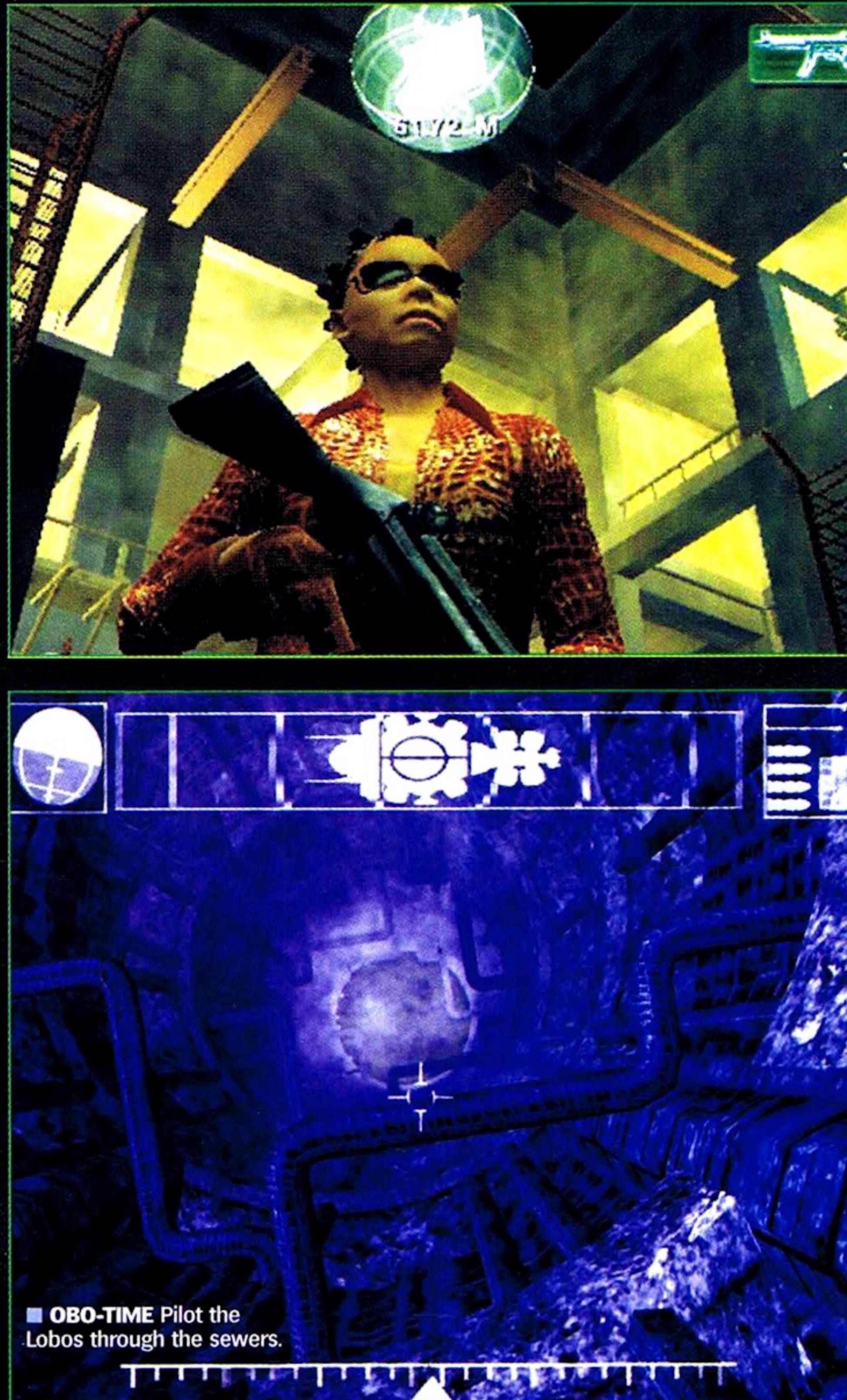


Health: 40%

8.60 M



YOUR BEST SHOT There's an almost endless supply of cool finishing moves.



To avoid the aforementioned 'The movie is my playguide' scenario, rather than double up on the plot of the movie, *Enter The Matrix* expands on it, by showing the player what Ghost and Niobe are up to when they're not in one of the movie's scenes. However, there are scenes from the film that cross over with events from the game. We're basically left with two games, Niobe's story, and Ghost's story, both of which make part of the complete *Matrix* tale as planned by the Wachowski brothers. In essence, the player is the unsung hero of *The Matrix Reloaded*, and the game shows us how the not-so-omnipotent members of the team take part in the adventure.

To understand what sort of game this is, Dave Perry summed up the player's goals by saying, "Your two big issues are: 1) Zion is in trouble and 2) Neo needs your help. During the action you'll be hearing references like 'If we don't do this, Neo fails.' or 'Neo needs us.' You find out why as you progress through the course of the game, but there are constant references to Zion and Neo. If you fail in your missions, you put them both in jeopardy."

What this entails is an adventure that involves martial arts combat, frenetic firefights with conventional (and somewhat non-conventional) weapons, a comprehensive driving model and the chance to pilot the Logos, a rebel hovercraft similar to the Nebuchadnezzar that Morpheus captained in the first film.

Enter The Matrix is a game that remains true to the storyline of *The Matrix Reloaded*, without trying to cover the whole story with just one style of play. As a rebel who jacks into the Matrix, you can bend and break the rules in the same way that wowed audiences everywhere. Better still, you can move straight from one style of action into another. Leaping into a brawl with four thugs, you find your Kung Fu moves come naturally. Also, at any time you can seamlessly introduce firearms into the equation, as the game's engine works as a third-person shooter too. Need to get somewhere fast? Commandeer a car and be there now – arcade-style driving physics and cars that crumple completely in crashes make the action intense.

Finally, there'll be times when you've got to leave the Matrix, piloting the Logos to deal with the

MEET THE STARS

These two actors may not be the main stars of the film, but as the playable characters, they're certainly the stars of *Enter The Matrix*.

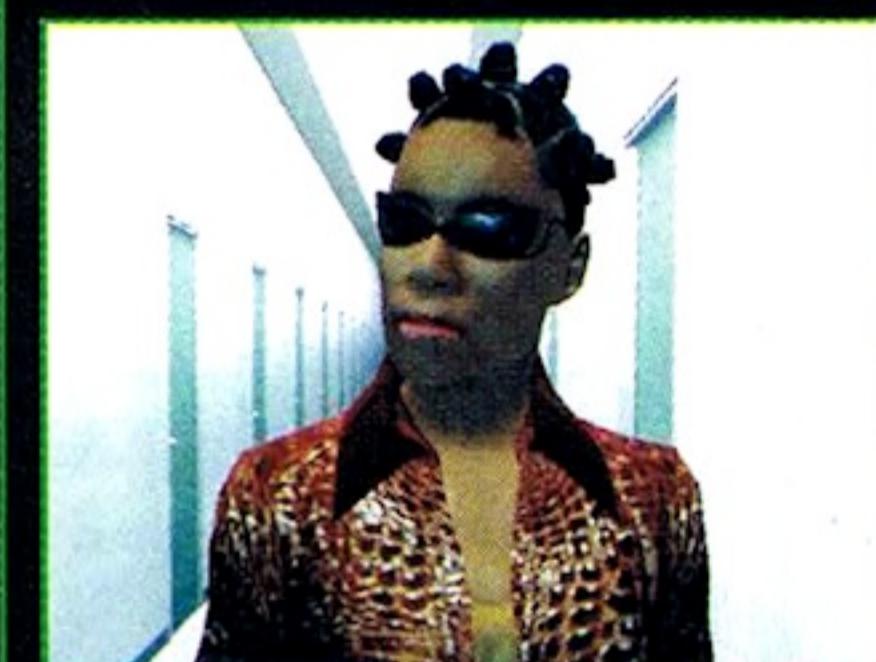
ANTHONY WONG – GHOST

We suspect Anthony's role in *The Matrix Reloaded* may be a bit light on the dialogue, as we don't see him in too many listing of the starring cast. There's a reason for that though, looking over Anthony's prolific filmography, he has appeared in many action films, the best of which was *Storm Riders*, while the most successful were *Armageddon* and *Hard Boiled*. We suspect Ghost is a believer in the theory that actions speak louder than words.



JADE PINKETT-SMITH – NIOBE

In case the hyphenated name doesn't remind you who plays our female protagonist Niobe, think *Big Willy Style*. Yup, Will Smith's wife has assumed the role of the hotshot pilot of the Lobos. Her filmography is not quite as lengthy as Wong's, but her roles have been a tad more conventional, including *Ali* and *Scream 2*. This leads us to believe Niobe is likely to be busting most of the dialogue.



Sentinels in the flesh, er, steel. In a nutshell, *Enter The Matrix* is a mission driven action adventure title that has enough gameplay elements to cater for all occasions.

Absolutely Authentic

Naturally, to create a game with a storyline that works in tandem with that of the film, Shiny has had to co-operate with the Wachowski brothers. But "had to" isn't really the right way to put it, because the men behind *The Matrix* movies are totally behind the game as well.

To think of *Enter The Matrix* as your usual videogame would be to overlook the unprecedented access Shiny has had to the movie's production facilities. With access to the movie sets, Shiny has been able to reproduce them as perfect 3D gaming environments, making it that much easier to deliver familiar surroundings to those who have seen the movie.

But it's the characters that bring a story to life, and cast members from *The Matrix Reloaded* have gone above and beyond the call to lend their voices and a whole lot of physically demanding motion capture. All the major cast members had lines to deliver, with the team having a

total of four hundred pages of script to go through. The Wachowskis wrote and directed the story, leaving the script to Shiny, but the brothers oversaw the extra hour of original movie footage for the game. The incentive for *Matrix* fans to play the game is very clear, as there's loads of the same sort of stuff that they'd look for in the film. The authentic *Matrix* production values don't stop with the full motion footage of the stars. Having all the actors in on the motion capture ensures that every character in the game moves like the real life counterpart. Anthony Wong (Ghost) and Jada Pinkett-Smith (Niobe) have put in unheard amounts of extra work for the game. On top of their physical contributions, they had to memorise more lines for their voice acting than they did for the movie. However, they can't complain about the work that Shiny has done to bring the characters to life. Forty-two markers were used in the facial motion capture, providing enough accuracy to avoid getting awkward expressions. Both actors were also given 3D body scans so that their characters' proportions are exact.

Master Yuen Wu Peng and his

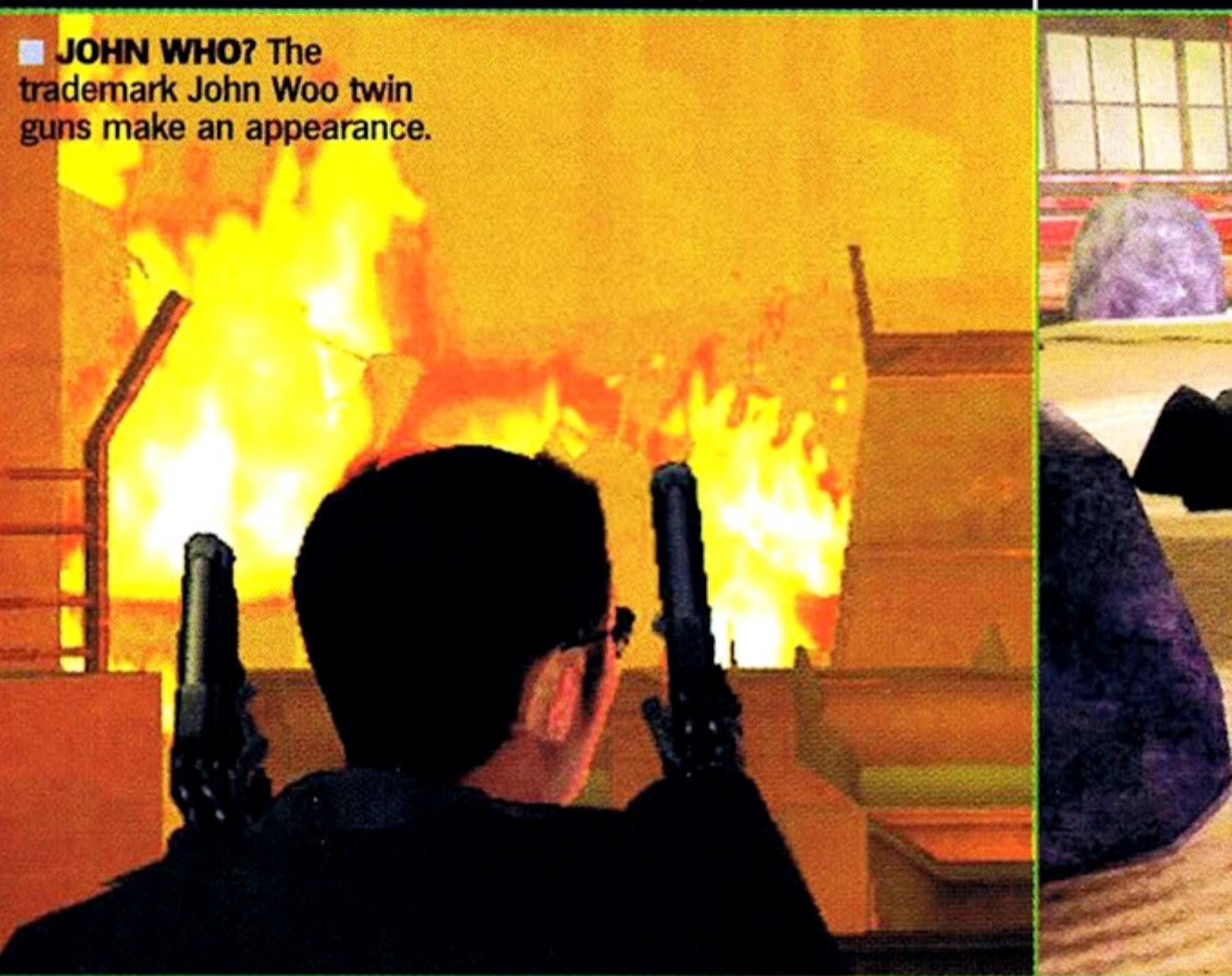
martial arts team from the movie pitched in to provide truly professional combat moves. The amount of styles and moves the team came up with is astounding, but more on the combat later.

Shiny's access to the movie even extended to working with Robert "Rock" Galotti, certified weapons expert and film armourer. He has given Dave Perry and the crew assistance in how the characters should hold weaponry, which is invaluable for the animators. Of course, in the eyes of the more blood-thirsty gamers out there, the authenticity comes at a price. We queried Dave Perry on the issue of violence within the game and he responded, "Violence is a big issue. We really aren't going to break the original movie's guidelines. In the original movie they were very careful about where they used blood. They used blood in one scene where Keanu's dead and boom! Blood all over the wall. They use blood to signify the death of Neo, anywhere else it's just a drop of blood on a jacket or something. The movie is very non-gory, and that's something we've been careful about in the game.

"We haven't got a specific moment in the game where we can't



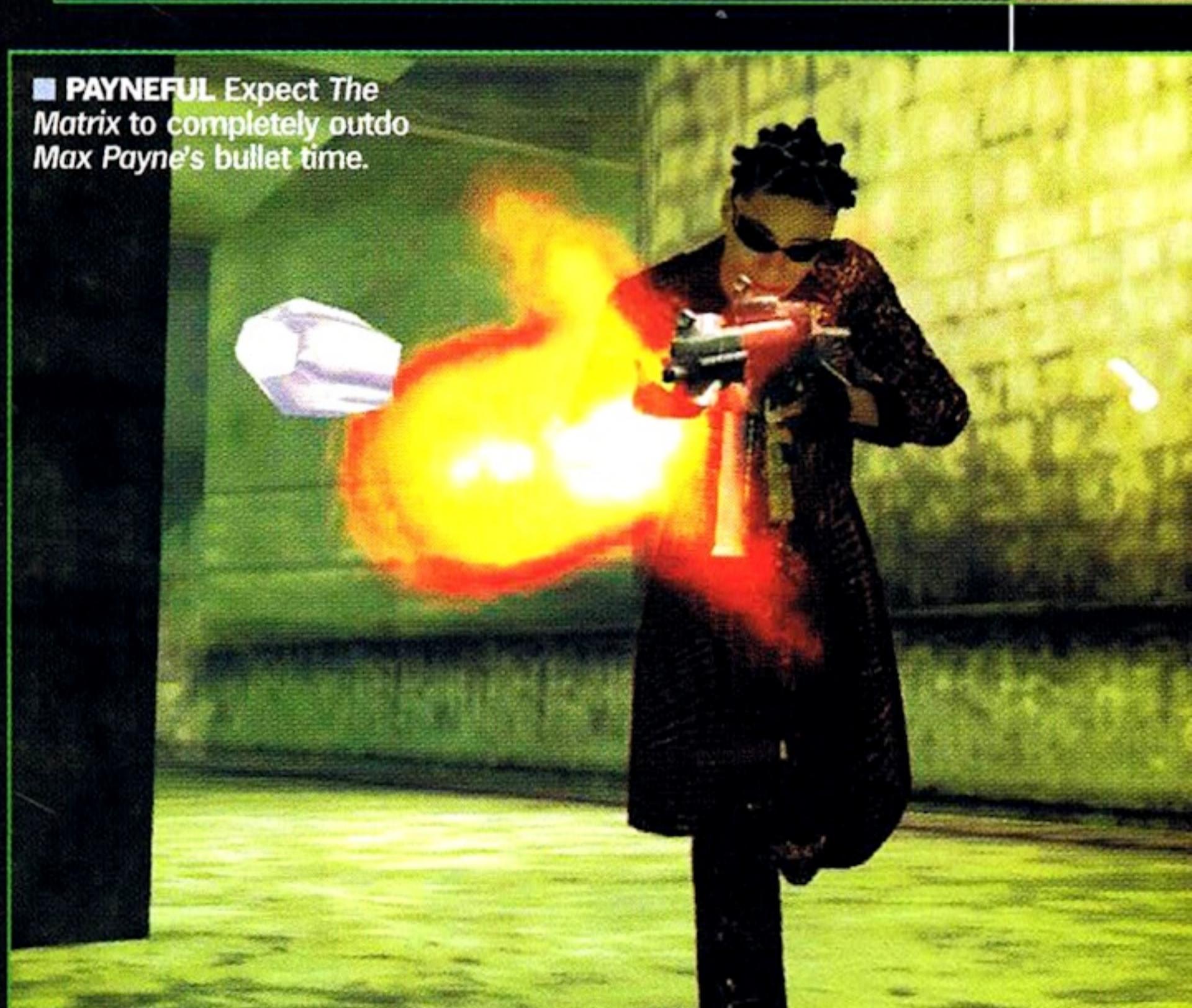
■ SNAKE EYES Niobe is kind of partial to snake skin outfits.



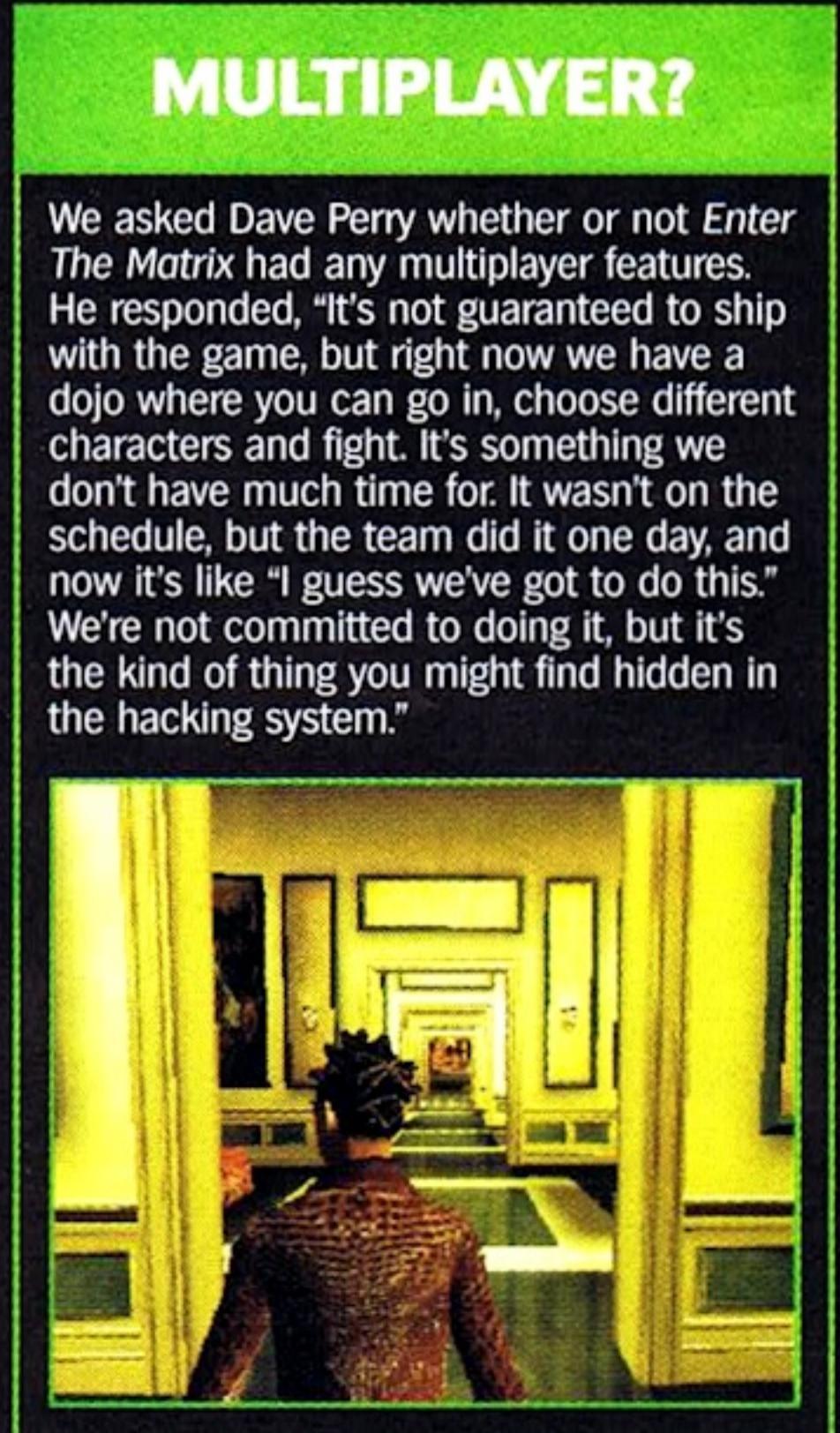
■ JOHN WHO? The trademark John Woo twin guns make an appearance.

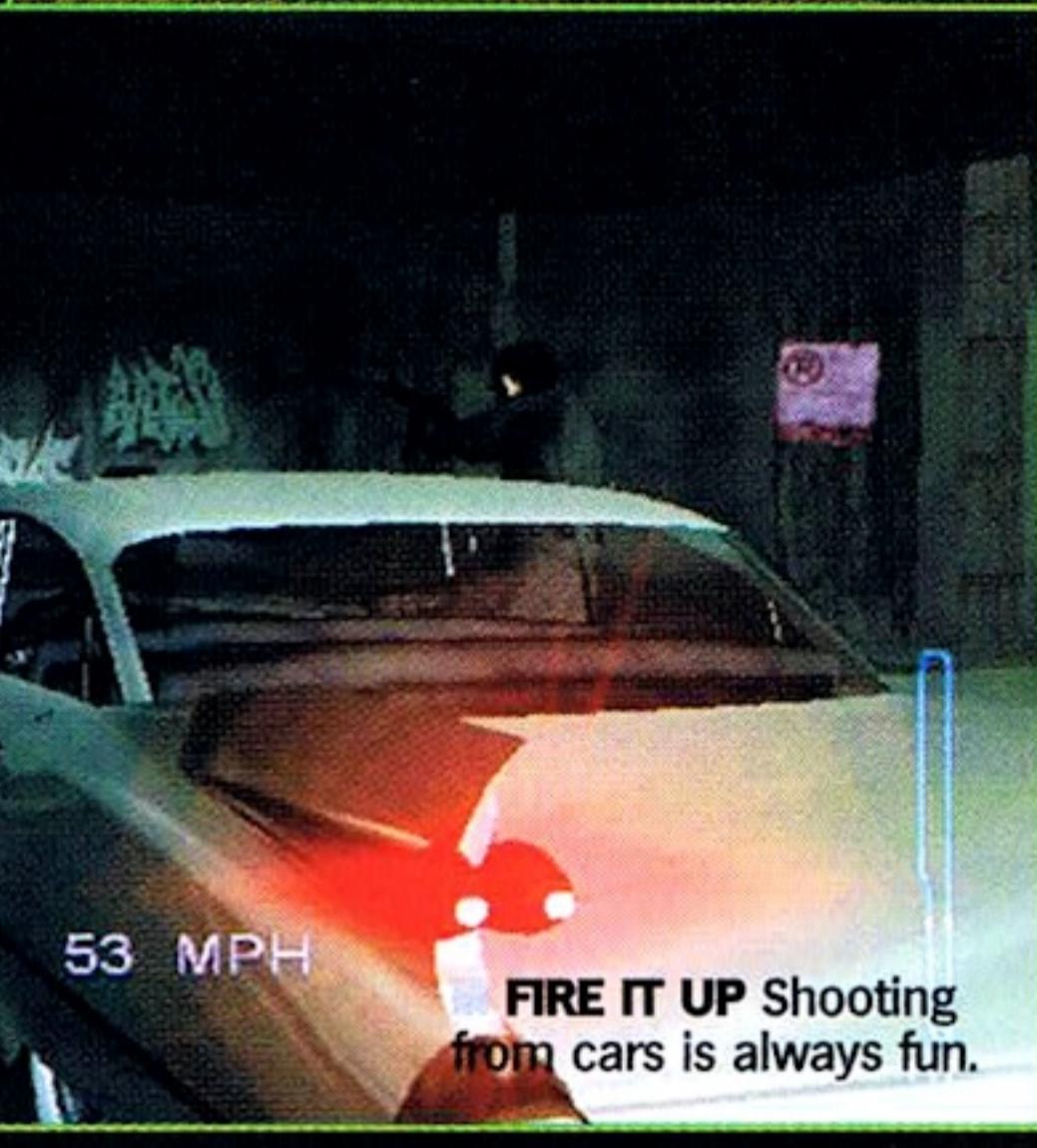
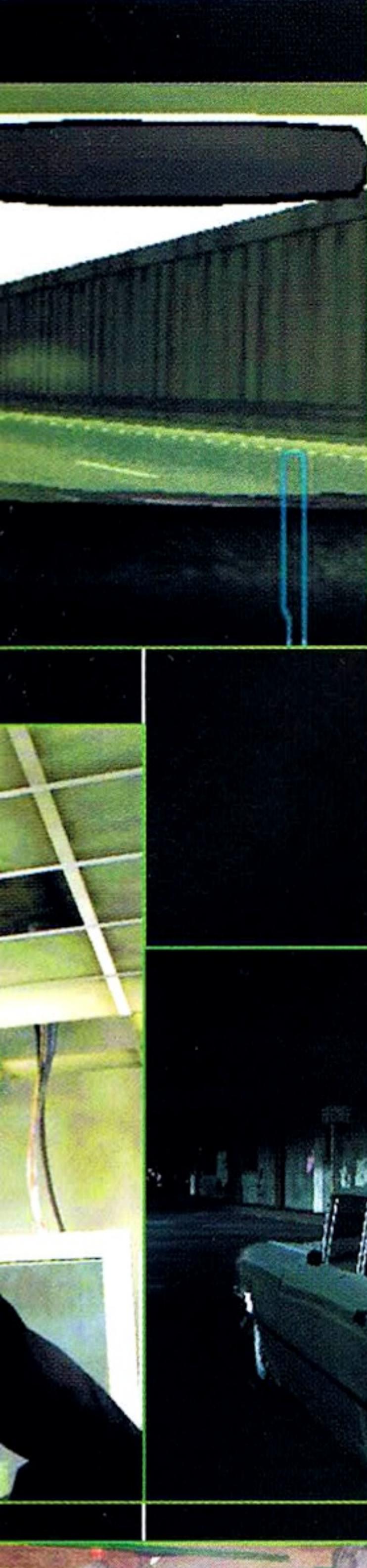


■ SWISH... Was the last thing he ever heard.



■ PAYNEFUL Expect *The Matrix* to completely outdo Max Payne's bullet time.





live without blood. So currently there're none. But as far as the moves go, there're pretty spectacular things you can do to people." This brings us to the action...

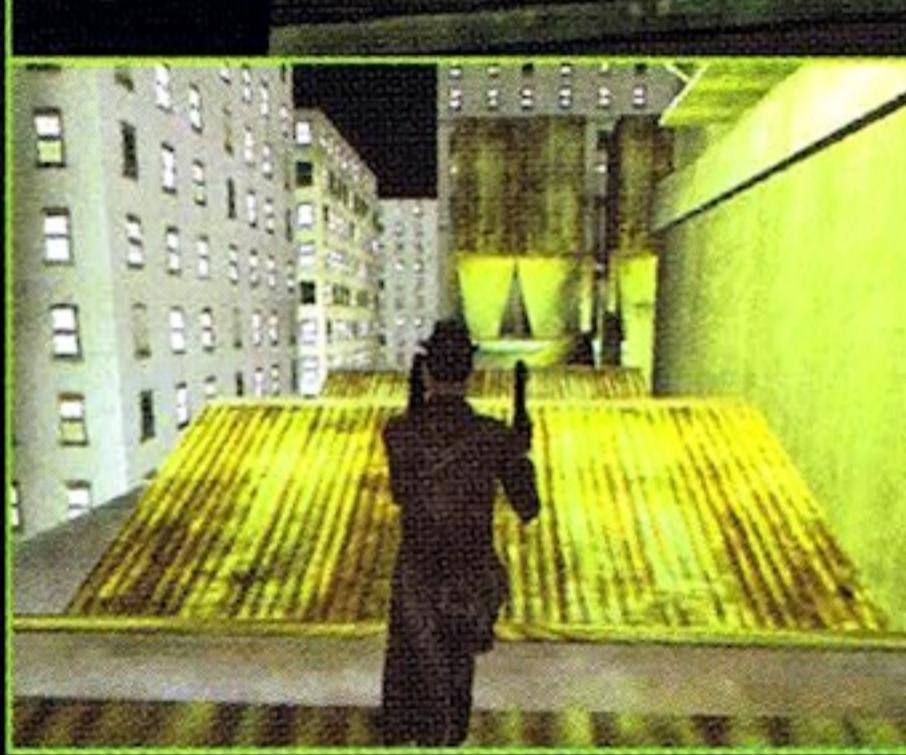
By fist or by firearm

It would appear that the majority of the gameplay in *Enter The Matrix* revolves around the third person view, reminding us of *Max Payne*, the game that borrowed bullet time. It also plays quite similarly too, with both having plenty of run-and-gun action and 'Focus' – the name given to the ability to move so fast that everything else seems slow.

The game plays out much like a typical shooter, except that the button for shooting changes to kicking once the player is close

TWO WACHOWSKIS?

For those of you wondering why you can't recall who the Wachowski brothers are, it's because other than being noted for delivering *The Matrix*, the movie that redefined our understanding of what digital effects were all about, they'd done very little. Andy and Larry's memorable movie prior to *The Matrix* was *Bound*, a gritty crime movie with lesbians. Naturally.



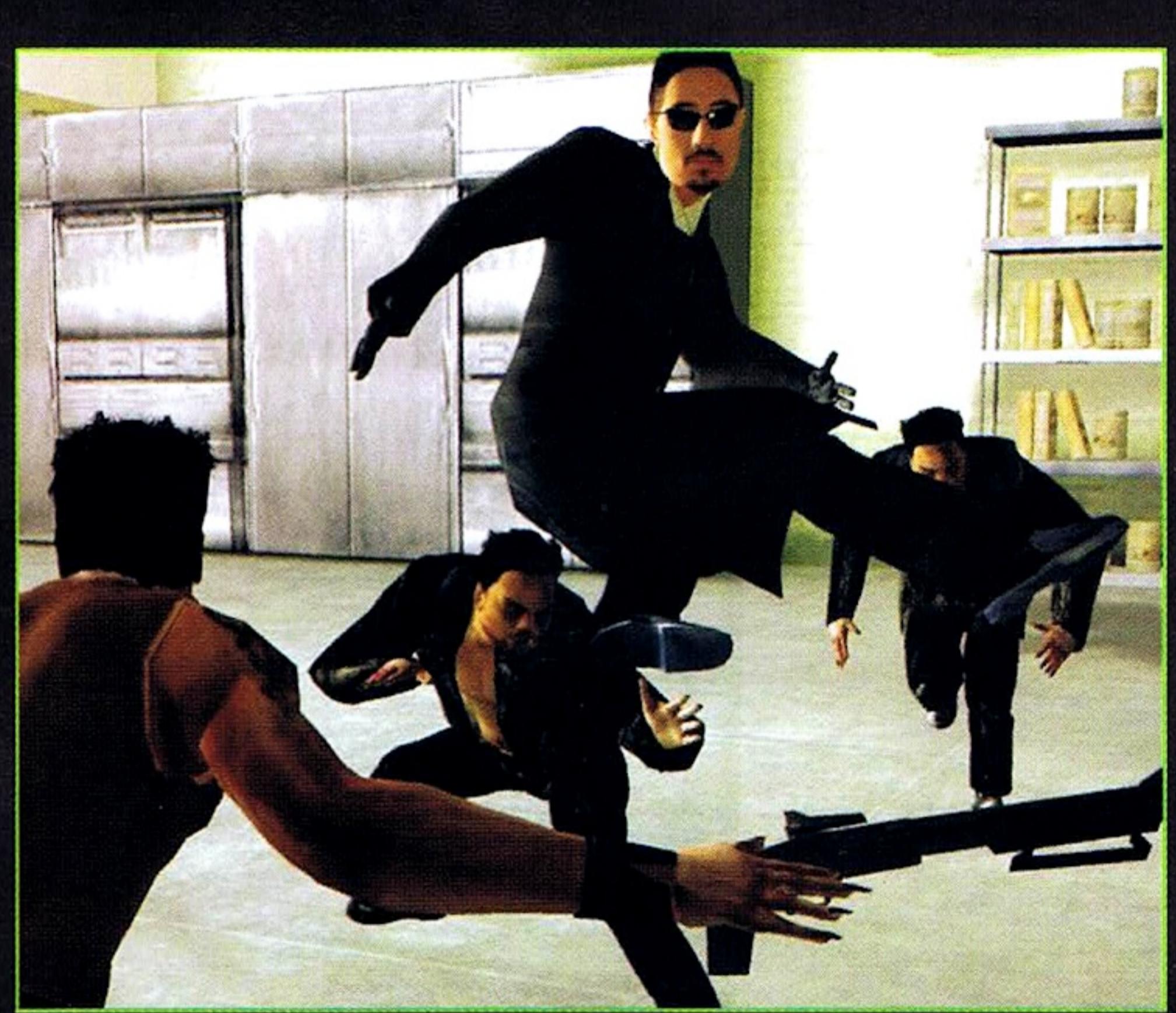
enough to their target. Thus it's possible to seamlessly go from gunplay to martial arts combat, and even mix the two with some stylish 'not looking' execution-style finishing moves for the show offs.

Of course your Operator, Sparks, is able to upload instant training programs to you in *The Matrix*, so both Ghost and Niobe get a new set of moves at various milestones in the game. Covering a vast range of styles, Dave Perry informed us that there are currently over 4,000 moves in the game!

Finding all of those moves will require some watchful tinkering with the controls to develop combos and effective tactics. With buttons for jump, counter, punch/throw, kick/shoot and strafe, the player is able to attack in many ways by using the left analogue stick. Now think about how much easier it will be to explore new combos when you can hit L1 or R1 to activate Focus and

GUN CONTROL

Switching from gun combat to hand-to-hand is easy to do.



slow the bad guys down.

The use of context sensitive buttons has helped the developers create such a large arsenal of attack moves. When you position Ghost or Niobe near a wall or some other suitable environmental feature, they will perform moves that utilise their surroundings. Just as Neo and the gang could run up walls and cartwheel around with ease in the movie, so too can Ghost and Niobe in the game. Springing off a wall to roundhouse the bad guys is easy and intuitive to do.

The other time context sensitive buttons come into play is when facing multiple opponents. You might not know that you are able strike three adversaries at once until you stand between them and try. Having a system that caters for strikes like this encourages the player to get in the thick of things rather than sticking to one-on-one fights.

Although Shiny openly declared

it was working still tweaking the camera, it must be said that the viewpoint occasionally moved about in an awkward fashion when switching between gunfights and hand-to-hand combat. Dave Perry highlighted the need to carefully balance the point at which the game changes the viewpoint from shooter-style to combat-style. He commented, "In *Enter The Matrix* you're either in fight mode, or out of fight mode. There's a fine line that we drew so that you either kick or go to shoot, and that does need to have some tweaking done."

Because the characters discard guns when they run out of ammo, and have new fighting moves replacing the old now and then, there's little room for character development in the statistical sense. Everything appears quite disposable, but there is one vaguely RPG-ish element in that Ghost and Niobe can increase their Focus limit through the course of the game,





■ WHAT SIGN? Niobe never learnt to read.



allowing them to achieve amazing feats in slow motion. Perry explains, "Bullet dodging is there when you're focusing – you see the bullets flying through the air, where every single shot produces a real bullet. While you can't snake your body around every bullet, it is possible to avoid some by dodging them. It doesn't by any means make you invincible, it's just that in bullet time, you'll see the shots whizzing by. In bullet time you tend to have a better chance of survival."

Naturally, different opponents offer different challenges. Just as Neo found out in the first film, many of your adversaries will be humans who are unknowingly working against the people trying to save them. Making the various guards, police, SWAT officers and other adversaries as smart as possible is going to be a make or break factor.

Perry described, "The enemies can hear and see what's going on, and are scripted to some extent to make sure they don't do stupid stuff, but once they know you're there they'll act intelligently. However, they can develop a group mentality, then they will pin you down together. You won't find them all bunching up and getting stuck. If there's a space where there are

pillars, they'll all take cover behind different pillars, but they'll work together, spread and pin.

Of course, a *Matrix* game wouldn't be complete without its own special breed of AI peacekeepers, the agents. Just as they were daunting to face in the movie, they make the perfect sort of nightmarish boss-type opponent in a videogame too.

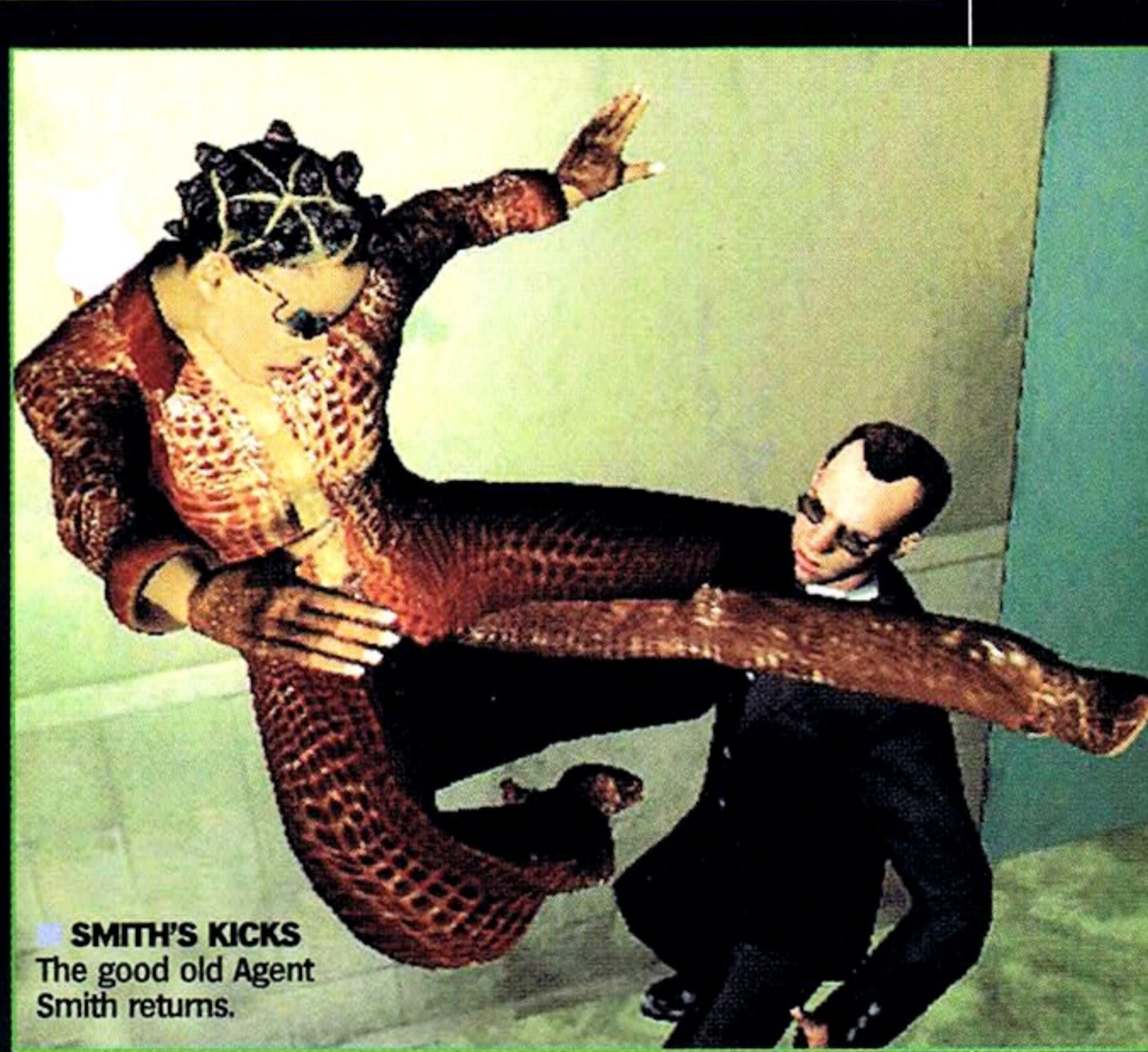
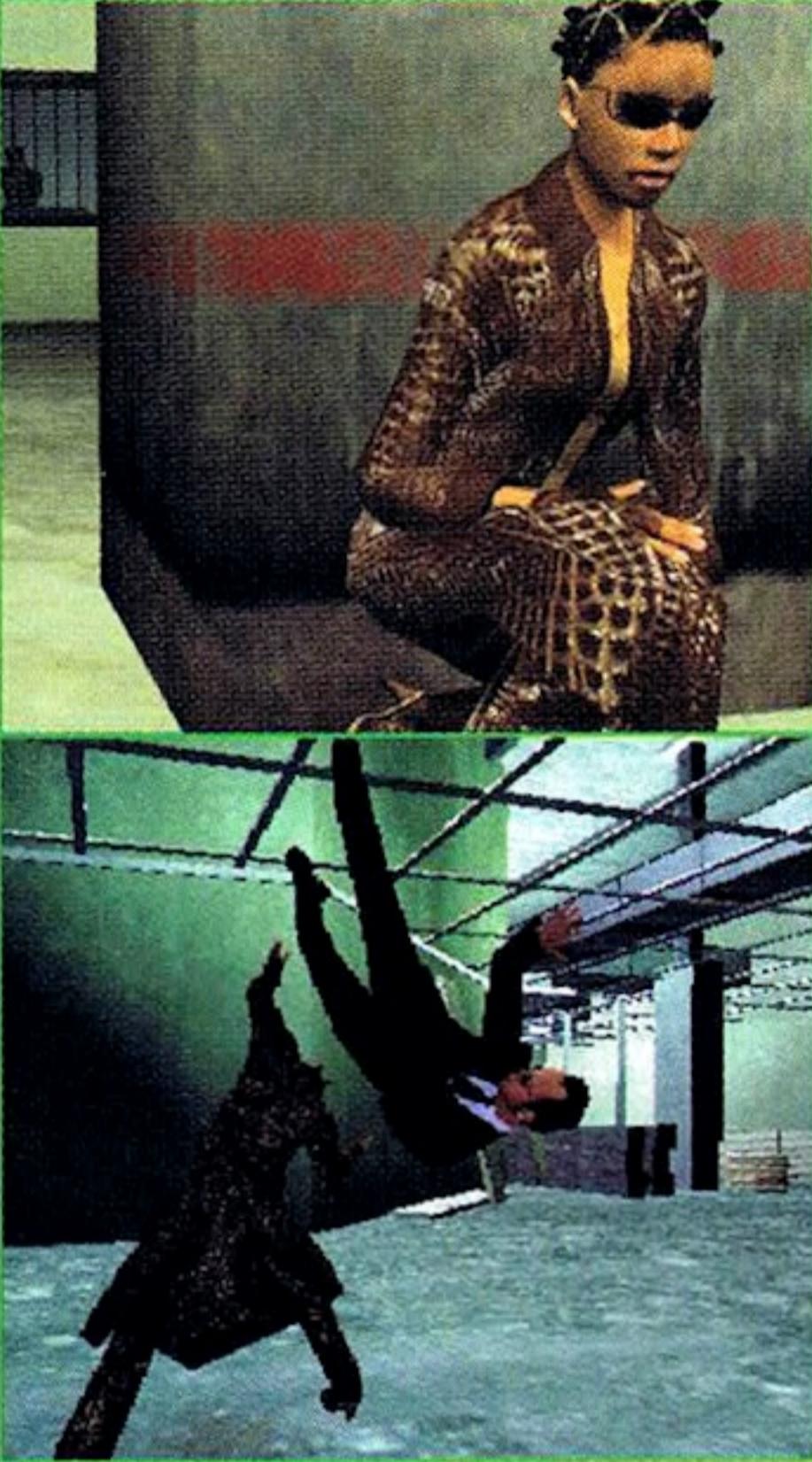
Dave Perry elaborates, "Ultimately you end up having 'exchanges' with the agents, where you'll throw some cool fighting move at him in bullet time and then you'll just start unloading a gun into him. What he'll do is start weaving, where he does the whole 'avoid the bullet thing'.

"That's the way the agents are currently set, they can absolutely dodge bullets. But it can make them pause for a second and give you time to run. Basically you throw your best moves at them and get the hell out of there. You have to remember the rules of the agents; if they die they just come back. The fight isn't over the minute you kill them, he just possesses the next guy."

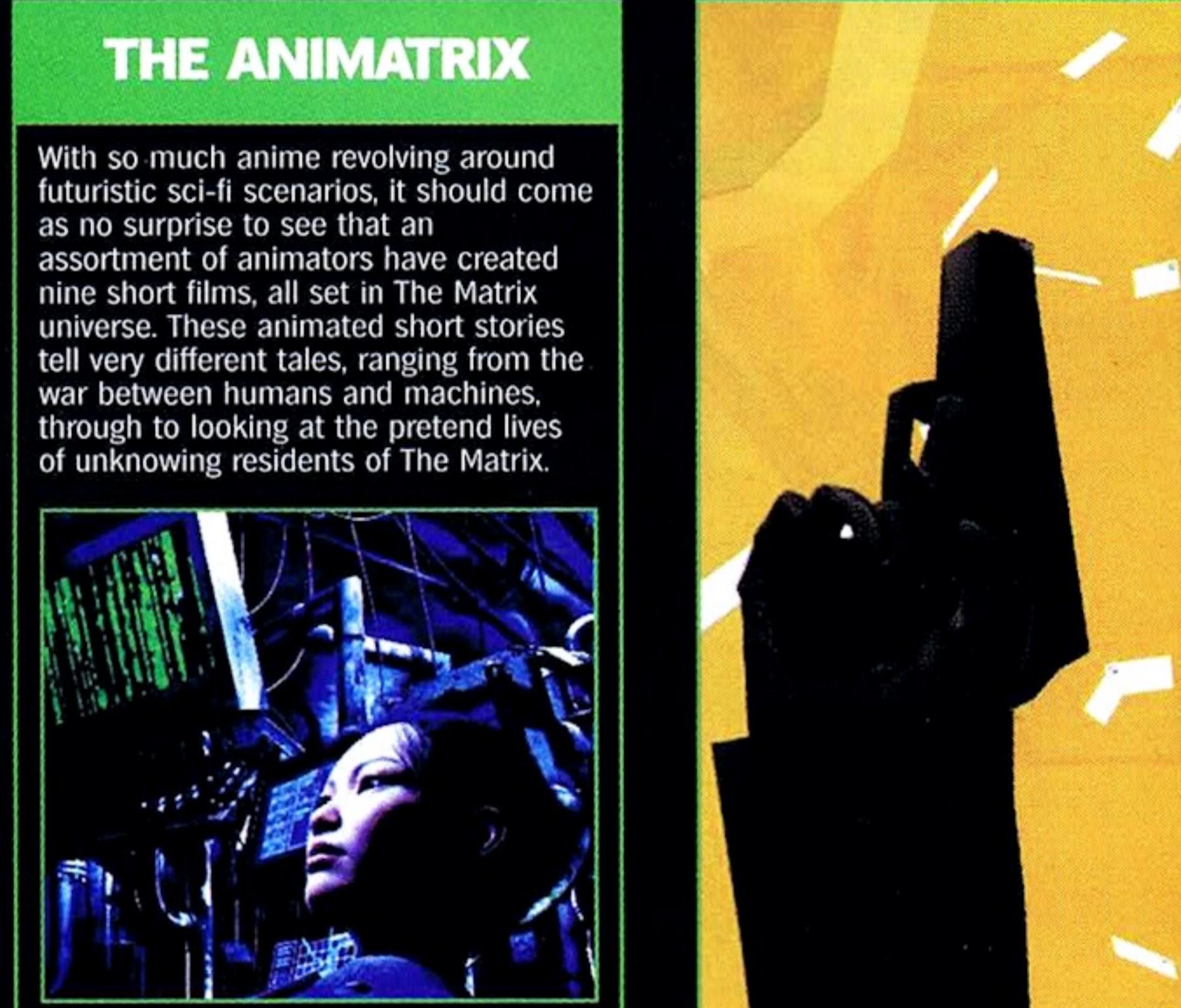
Quite frankly, after the early years of gaming, where bosses were usually chronically difficult, *OPS2* heartily endorse the use of a no-win scenario such as this. Think *GTA III* and *Vice City*. Think having



■ WALL CRAWLER
Spider-Man isn't the only one.



■ SMITH'S KICKS
The good old Agent Smith returns.



THE ANIMATRIX

With so much anime revolving around futuristic sci-fi scenarios, it should come as no surprise to see that an assortment of animators have created nine short films, all set in *The Matrix* universe. These animated short stories tell very different tales, ranging from the war between humans and machines, through to looking at the pretend lives of unknowing residents of *The Matrix*.

Perry sums them up nicely with, "If you just stand there like Morpheus did in the first movie in the bathroom and start punching away, the agent will just kick your ass. You will end up dead!"

In addition to springing off walls, or slamming opponents into them, the player can interact with the environment in all the sorts of ways you'd want them too. They can perform useful tricks, such as hanging from a pipe by their legs, then proceeding to take a shot with their weapon of choice. Fingers latch on to wire fences, allowing the player to scale them easily. The option to move around slowly and quietly to remain undetected can also prove a welcome change of pace now and then.

Reality Check

Back in the real world, Zion is under threat from the Sentinels, and this paves the way for some variety, such as piloting the





hovercraft Lobos against the squid-like monstrosities. This element of *Enter The Matrix* was not on show, so all we can really tell you is to expect things such as manning the guns against the Sentinels while your crew pilot the ship. The inclusion of the EMP weapon is also a dead certainty.

Rumours suggest that *Matrix Revolutions*, the third and supposedly final of the three *Matrix* films, will revolve around the battle for Zion, the last remaining human city. For that reason, we expect both *Enter The Matrix* and *Matrix Reloaded* to feature very little in terms of piloting the hovercraft, Lobos.

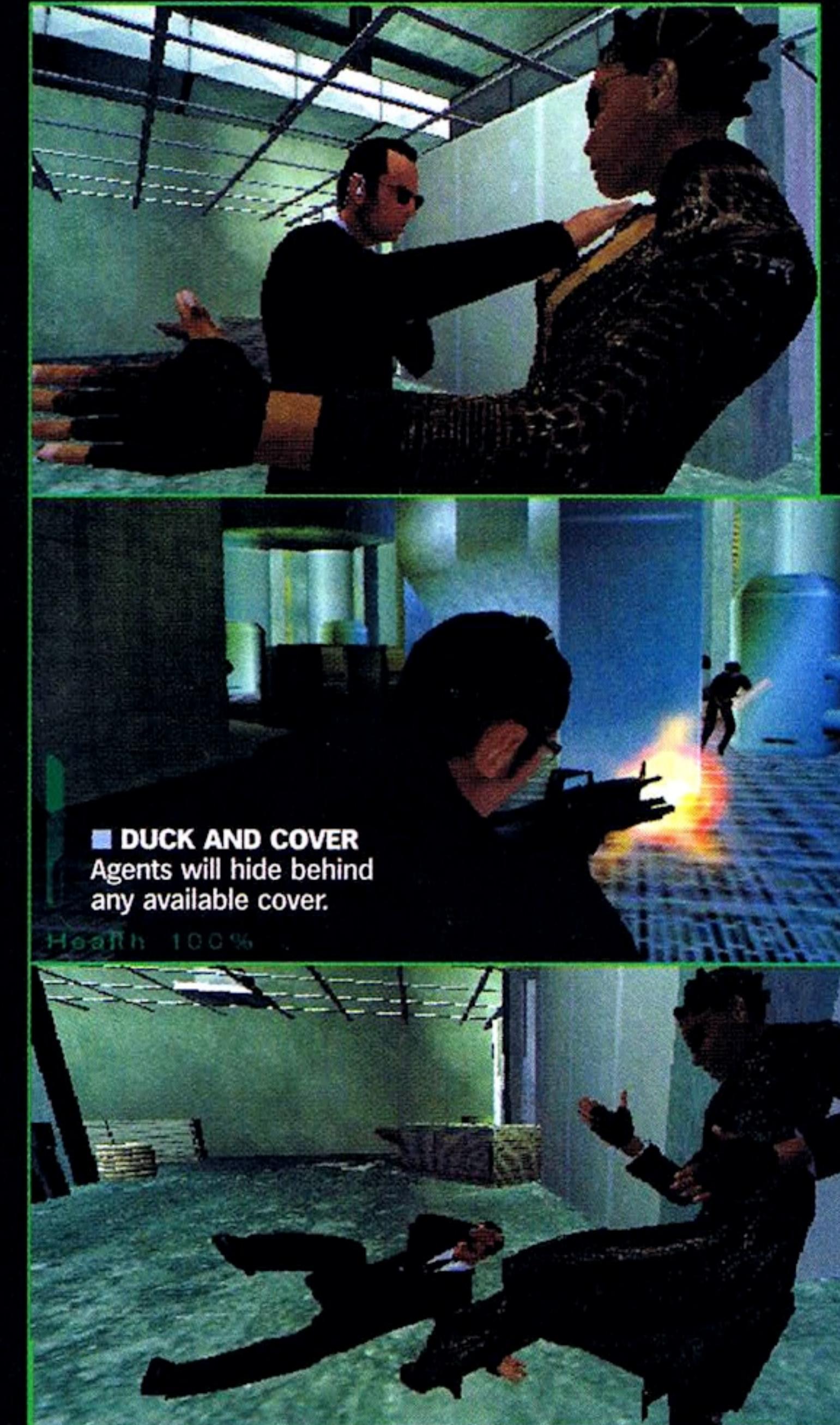
Actually, there's a 'bonus' fifth aspect to *Enter The Matrix*'s gameplay that offers an indulgent diversion for fans – a hacking system. Think back to the scene where Neo was hacking away in his barely-lit apartment, and he had his first contact with Trinity. We couldn't see this at the demonstration, but Perry paints the picture for us in gameplay terms: "The hacking system is very simple. There's no instructions, you just select hacking and get a little DOS prompt. The game creates a list of the commands or directories you discover, and allows you to recall them from a list to save you having to type them again."

"The only command that we nudge you towards is 'help', and from that point forward, it's like a trail of breadcrumbs. While you're using the computer system, you get hacked by Trinity, and she goes 'knock, knock' on your screen. She eventually gives you some hacking tools, and those help you go further."

Devil's Advocate

Before you let our tirade of praise make you believe that we've just unveiled the Holy Grail of videogaming, know that what we saw was a game that still needed some work to realise its obvious potential. The reason that we weren't given an opportunity to play the driving and Lobos aspects of the game is that they were probably looking a little too 'in progress'. Fair enough. What we were shown looked like it had been thought out so carefully that we're confident that unseen elements aren't likely to be lacking. Also, it must be noted that when Mr Perry was demonstrating some of the combat, before we had a go, he was able to make the whole thing look a hell of a lot better than we could, suggesting that more practise would have made what we saw look better as well. We truly hope Shiny manages to accomplish its lofty aims, and with Perry so willing to highlight the areas that needed work, the fact that he's aware of them makes us believe Shiny will deliver!

Due to the fact that *Enter The Matrix* reveals vital information about what takes place in *The Matrix Reloaded*, Warner isn't letting anyone get their hands on the game until it launches along with the film. For that reason, we're unlikely to be able to get you a review before the game is out, but sitting on the fence wouldn't do you any good, would it? OPS2 feels comfortable recommending that when May rolls around you head to your local gaming store and *Enter The Matrix*. □ **Dan Toose**



PERRY'S POINTS – THE ENTER THE MATRIX CHECKLIST.

Without the aid of thumbscrews, Mr Perry reluctantly confirmed the following for us.

■ **BIKELESS!** – There won't be any motorcycle riding opportunities. Perry explained that you need to be in a vehicle that can protect you – otherwise you're history on the highways.

■ **HUMAN SHIELD?** – Perry pointed out that the problem with allowing this to be introduced in the thick of battle was that players would unintentionally pick up bodies. So it's not in there, but you can grab someone in a choke hold, and they will shield you in the event that they get in the way of a bullet.

■ **SAVE US!** – Save points will be used, and auto-saves will prevent annoyingly lengthy double-takes.

■ **THREE WORLDS!** – Perry sums up the various realities at hand, "In general we play around with a mix of three worlds, the real world, the Matrix and the Construct level."

■ **MATRIX 3?** – Another game for the next film? Dave says, "We are discussing game three, but the problem is that movie three is launching this Christmas and there's no way we can make another game in that amount of time."

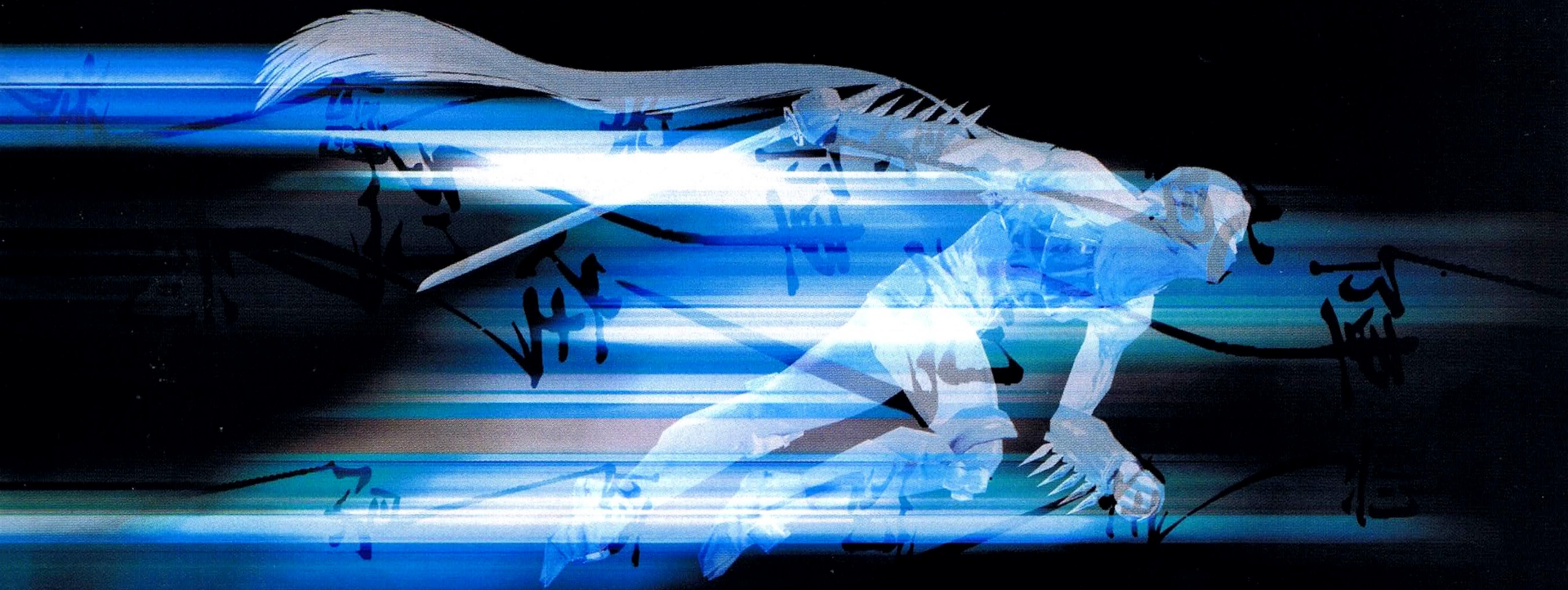
■ **SIZE MATTERS?** – Those that care about how long they'll be punching in will be pleased to hear Perry note that both Niobe and Ghost's adventures take 20 hours each to complete.

■ **ENGINE OVERHAULED** – Perry can't wait to start another game using the development tools they designed to create *Enter The Matrix*.

■ **OLD SCHOOL** – As well as using a USB keyboard, the hacking system caters for freaks who try to enter stuff like old Spectrum ZX script, or other foreign retro-computer code.



You can't fight what you can't see



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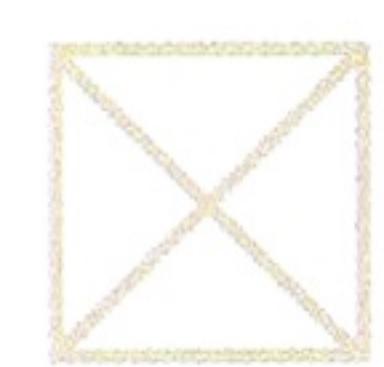
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WORDS: JON JORDAN

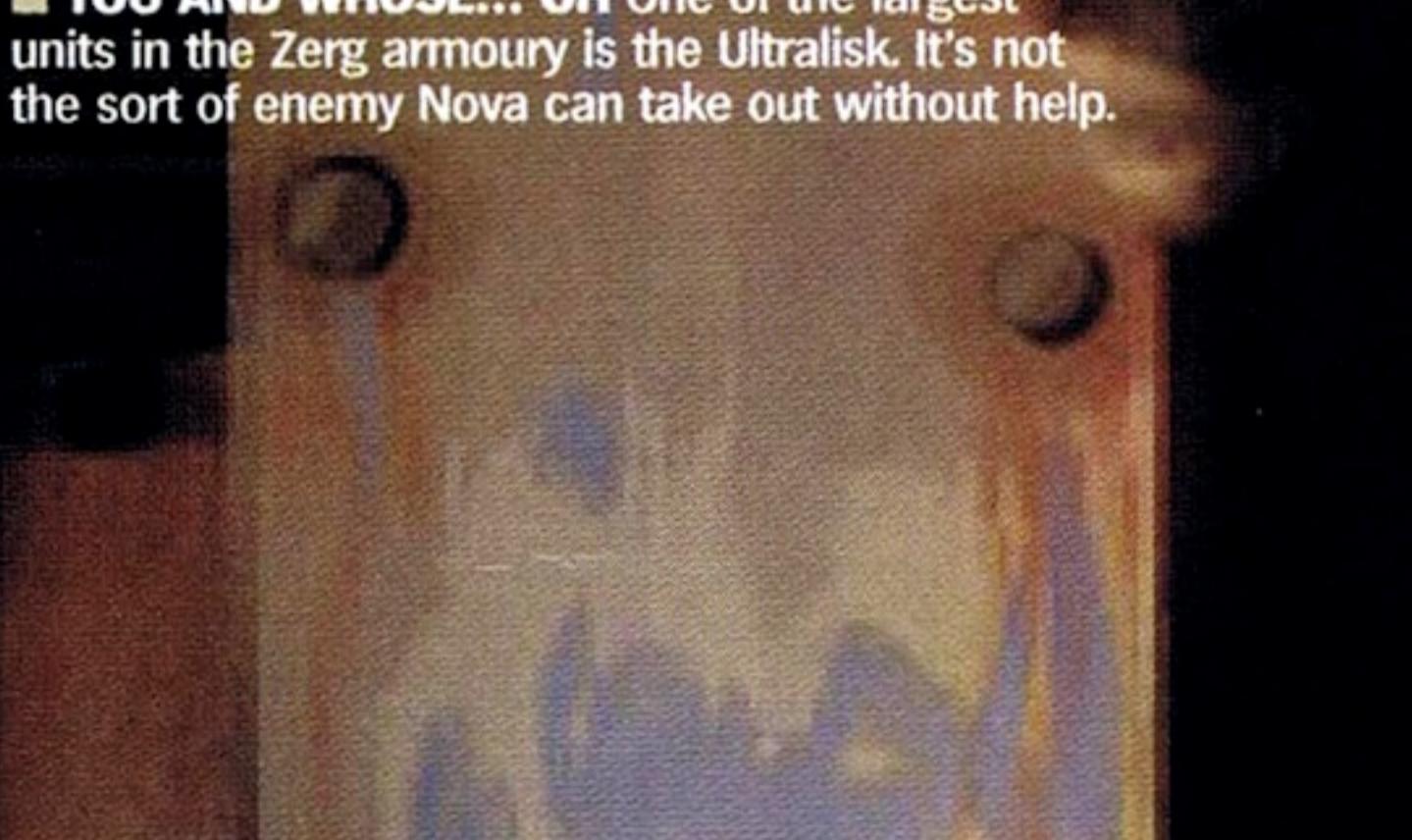
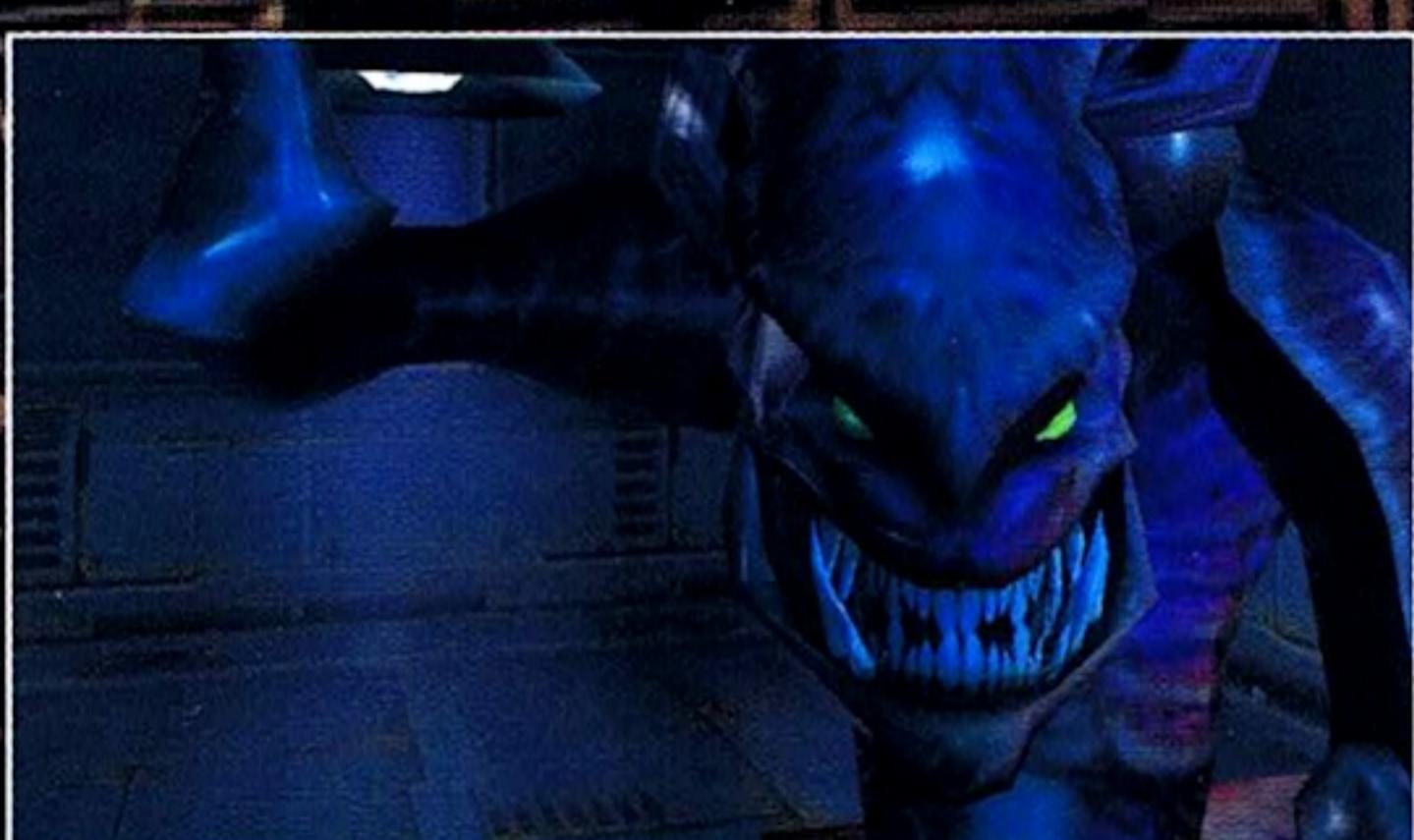
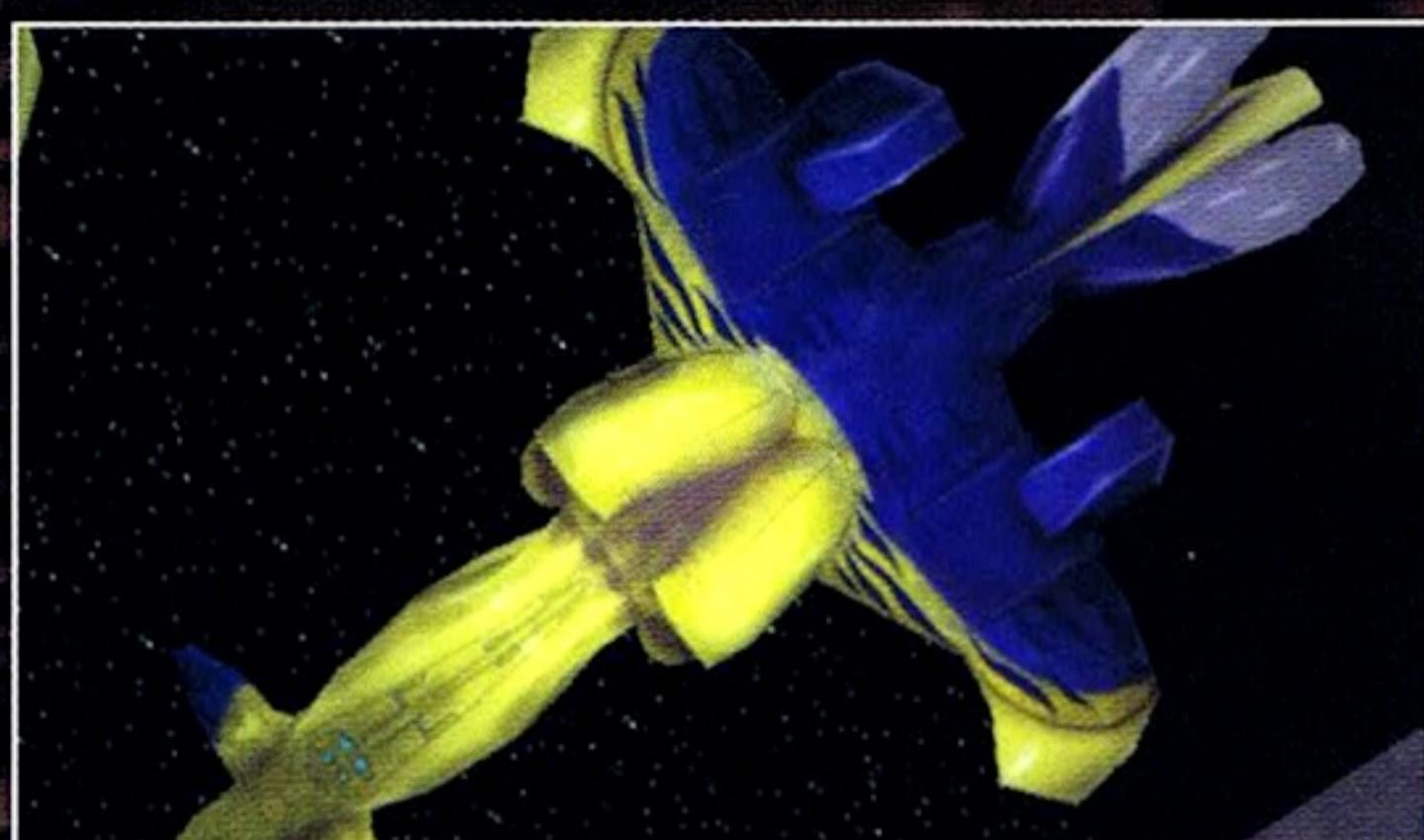
HOST IN THE MACHINE

One of the world's most successful developers of PC games, Blizzard Entertainment, reckons it's about to crack the console market. OPS2 flew to LA to check out the credentials of its first PS2 title, StarCraft: Ghost.

STARCRAFT: GHOST



■ GENETIC MUTATIONS The Zerg are a species that use conquered enemies' DNA to evolve new mutated forms.



■ YOU AND WHOSE... OH One of the largest units in the Zerg armoury is the Ultralisk. It's not the sort of enemy Nova can take out without help.

WHAT THE HELL IS STARCRAFT?

A brief history of the StarCraft universe.

Released on PC in 1998, *StarCraft* is a three-way real-time strategy (RTS) game set in the late 25th Century, in a sector of space at the edge of the Milky Way. The races fighting for survival are: the Terrans, descendants of criminals exiled from Earth because of their genetic aberrations; the Zerg, a mixture of ferocious species which harvest the genetic material of creatures they conquer in order to evolve into new, nastier forms; and the Protoss, a technically-advanced civilisation with amazing psionic powers and strong ritualistic tendencies.

As with all RTS games, each of the races have mutual strengths and weaknesses, which makes the basic mechanics of *StarCraft* akin to an elaborate game of paper-scissors-stone. But, apart from this, one of the major selling points of *StarCraft* is its complex back story, which spans thousands of years and reveals the individual histories and politics of each of the races. This was particularly true in the case of *StarCraft: Brood War* – a mission pack add-on, which focused on renegade Terran Sarah Kerrigan's attempt to take control of the Zerg Brood from their commander, Cerebrates, in her own bid for domination.



In the words of the Bran Van 3000 song, *What the hell is Official PlayStation 2 Magazine doing drinking in LA?* Ironically, considering it's been freezing in Australia for most of the past month, we've come to visit the appropriately-named developer Blizzard, in a city where it's almost never cold, southern Los Angeles. A brief history of Blizzard just serves to deepen the mystery of why we're here. Renowned for its multi-million-selling PC games (see *Island Of The Blizzard King*) the company hasn't released a console game since 1994 (*Blackthorne*, SNES). Its latest project however, *StarCraft: Ghost*, is about to change all that.

"It's definitely a big deal for Blizzard to go back to consoles. We want to make a huge impression," explains *Ghost*'s Producer John Lagrave. "We want players to go, 'Wow, *Ghost*, what a great game. Who made it? Blizzard? Never heard of them. They're new to consoles? Great, I'll look out for more Blizzard titles.' That's our goal."

It's an admirable sentiment of course. The huge global installed base of PlayStation 2 makes it a vital business opportunity for developers, even for those as successful as Blizzard have been with PC games. But the jump to console remains a big risk. Almost everything about PC games is different to console games. Why does Blizzard think it can pull it off?

STARCRAFT: GHOST

HEADS-UP

The user interface for the game is split into four main areas.

Nova's health bar (green) and psionic power bar (blue).

The large threat locator, which displays the sight zones and alertness states of any enemies in the vicinity. It also gives an indication of the amount of noise Nova is making via concentric rings which emit from her position.

In this corner of the screen you can see which psionic power Nova has selected. These powers include stealth, infra-red sight and hyperspeed.



The weapons display shows weapon type, amount of ammo left and selected grenade type. In addition, Nova can also auto-lock onto enemies and machinery and scan them to discover their species and possible weaknesses.



STORM FORCE
John Lagrave (top),
Producer. Bill Roper
(below), Blizzard's
Vice President.



BLIZZARD
ENTERTAINMENT

ISLAND OF THE BLIZZARD KING

Known for its RTS and RPG titles, Blizzard is one of the top ten PC developers in the world.

Based in Orange County, Blizzard employs around 140 staff. It also has a strong studio called Blizzard North, near San Francisco.

Its orcs-and-elves series, *WarCraft* has sold over 10 million units, the *Diablo* series has sold over eight million, while fantasy series *StarCraft* has sold over six million units. The one thing Blizzard hasn't done is develop console games. It did, however, create games for Nintendo's SNES and Sega's MegaDrive in the early 1990s in its original incarnation, *Silicon & Synapse*. Three of these games, *The Lost Vikings*, *Rock 'N Roll Racing* and *Blackthorne* are currently being ported to Game Boy Advance.

As well as making games, Blizzard also hosts the free online gaming service Battle.Net, which it claims is the world's largest.



GHOST OF A CHANCE Nova is one kick-ass heroine with the potential to give both Sam Fisher and Snake a run for their money.

NEVER ENDING GORY The Zerg are known to attack in relentless swarms.

One ace Blizzard has to play is female lead character Nova, the 'ghost' of the title. She's a supercharged, genetically-advanced Terran combat operative; as Lagrave puts it, "an elite unit among elite units." Although Nova's not new to the world of *StarCraft* (see *What The Hell Is StarCraft?*) this is the first time she – or any single character – has taken up a lead role as the face of the franchise. A canny move that accompanies the change from a zoomed out, *Diablo*-style isometric game view to a 3D, third-person perspective. The main character also gives the game a more personalised point of view for the fickle and historically RTS-shy console masses.

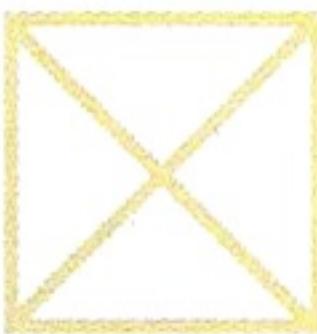
CHAMPION SUPER NOVA

Nova's no shrinking violet either. As well as athletic hand-to-hand combat moves, she can slip into Stealth mode, becoming transparent in the process, while her infra-red sight allows her to see through walls and hyperspeed senses enable her to move three times as fast as enemies. In addition, she carries an upgradable assault/sniper rifle, 12 different types of grenades and nukes to take out the opposition, plus communications equipment to call in air strikes. What a star! She also has a ponytail, and although no-one at Blizzard mentions Lara, you get the idea that Blizzard's character designers wouldn't necessarily resent the comparison.

For the cynically-minded journalist at least, the comparisons don't end there. As Lagrave demonstrates various *Ghost* levels to OPS2, a list of familiar game features starts to emerge. How many did you spot in the previous paragraph, for example? For hand-to-hand combat, check *Oni*; for stealth, check *Metal Gear Solid*; for infra-red see-through-wall vision, tick *Red Faction*; hyperspeed is surely *Max Payne's* 'bullet time' renamed; while call-down strikes were last seen in *Conflict: Desert Storm*.

Other borrowed elements include a game dynamic which, on occasions, could see Nova fighting her individual battles in the midst of a larger conflict, much

NOVA CAN BECOME TRANSPARENT, SEE THROUGH WALLS AND MOVE THREE TIMES AS FAST AS ENEMIES. WHAT A STAR!



■ PRO ACTIVE The most mysterious race in *StarCraft*, the Protoss, are powerful warriors.



■ NOW YOU SEE HER... When Nova goes into Stealth mode, she becomes transparent – the more noise she makes, the more her transparency fades.

like the *Dynasty Warrior* games, and the ability to use a variety of in-game vehicles – best demonstrated by *Halo*.

So how does Blizzard defend its creation against these charges of stealing the best bits from the competition? "Every game we've ever made has been influenced by other media, whether it's films, games or TV," argues Bill Roper, Blizzard's Vice President and the company's de facto global spokesman. "Certainly there have been things in other games we've played and we've thought they were fun, so we've used them. But we're not trying to crib directly from other games. Equally, we'll pull out pieces of the game if we don't think they're fun. We've done that with every game we've ever released."

Lagrange is also keen to talk to us about Blizzard's fundamental philosophy when it comes to completing games. "I understand the point that *Ghost* could end up a morass of nothing, but the bottom line is, this game won't be released if it's not fun," he stresses. "If we're not happy with any part of this game, it's gone. That's a fact."

And it certainly is. Blizzard is notorious for not releasing games until it's completely happy with them, even if it means adding 18 months and millions of dollars to the development cycle, which is what happened to its last PC title, *WarCraft III*. The result was, of course, that when the game was finally released, it went on to sell over three million copies, becoming one of the fastest-selling PC games in history.

STAR PERFORMER

"Everyone at Blizzard, from the PR people to the executives and all the developers, is a hardcore gamer," Lagrange is quick to point out. "Games are what we're about. Our reputation is too important for us to ship games we don't think are great, so we keep working on them until they are great. Then we ship them."

While Blizzard's credentials as a game developer are second to none, the one thing it lacks is experience in making a game for PS2. With this in mind, *Ghost*'s coding duties have been handed over to another Californian developer, Nihilistic. Interestingly, this company has never made a PS2 game either, but has plenty of experience creating fast-moving 3D games, including LucasArts' shooter *Jedi Knight: Dark Forces 2* and Activision's third-person RPG *Vampire: The Masquerade* – both on PC.

"Nihilistic is handling the technology side," explains



■ NOUVEAU NOVA This is the original Nova. She has since become younger, blonder and more svelte.

METAMORPHOSIS

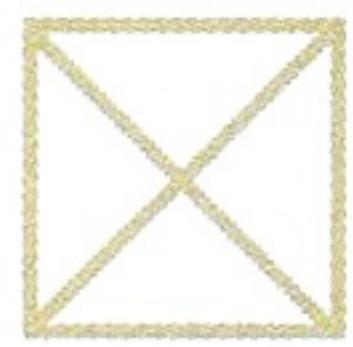
Nova's had a bit of makeover since we saw her last...

Although *StarCraft: Ghost* was only unveiled during the Tokyo Game Show in Japan late last year, feedback from fans and the press has already resulted in changes to the main character, Nova. "She's become a little sleeker," explains Producer John Lagrange, with a grin. "Her new shape is more in keeping with the fact that she's a ghost unit, an assassin. Previously she looked a little muscular and unwieldy, considering the athletic moves she can do."

Nova's also younger. "Age is a big deal for the Asian market," explains Lagrange, who before becoming *StarCraft: Ghost*'s Producer, was Blizzard's Localisation Manager for Asia. The importance of this market for Blizzard can't be overestimated, considering *StarCraft: Brood War* has sold over one million copies in Korea, which makes the country Blizzard's most important sales territory after the US. A co-publishing deal with Capcom will also see *StarCraft: Ghost* launched in Japan, a country where few non-domestically developed games are successful. Small but crucial design decisions like the character's age could make all the difference. Another change has seen Nova's hair lightened from a tone that looked suspiciously ginger to a sexier blonde.



STARCRAFT: GHOST



COLD BLOODED KILLER You won't have time to question your enemy. Reptile or insect? Who cares? Run away!



THE GOOD GUYS

Marines are the basic armed unit of the Terran and are ideal for combat in wide open spaces.



→ Roper. "It's got a flexible and powerful engine and the game looks fantastic. We are dividing the concept and design work between us and it's working out great – Nihilistic's Lead Programmer, Rob [Huebner] actually worked on the original *StarCraft* game." Things are looking so good, in fact, that Blizzard, which is normally very cagey about issuing formal release dates, reckons *StarCraft: Ghost* will have a simultaneous worldwide release, including nine language versions, by the end of this year.

CRAFT FARE

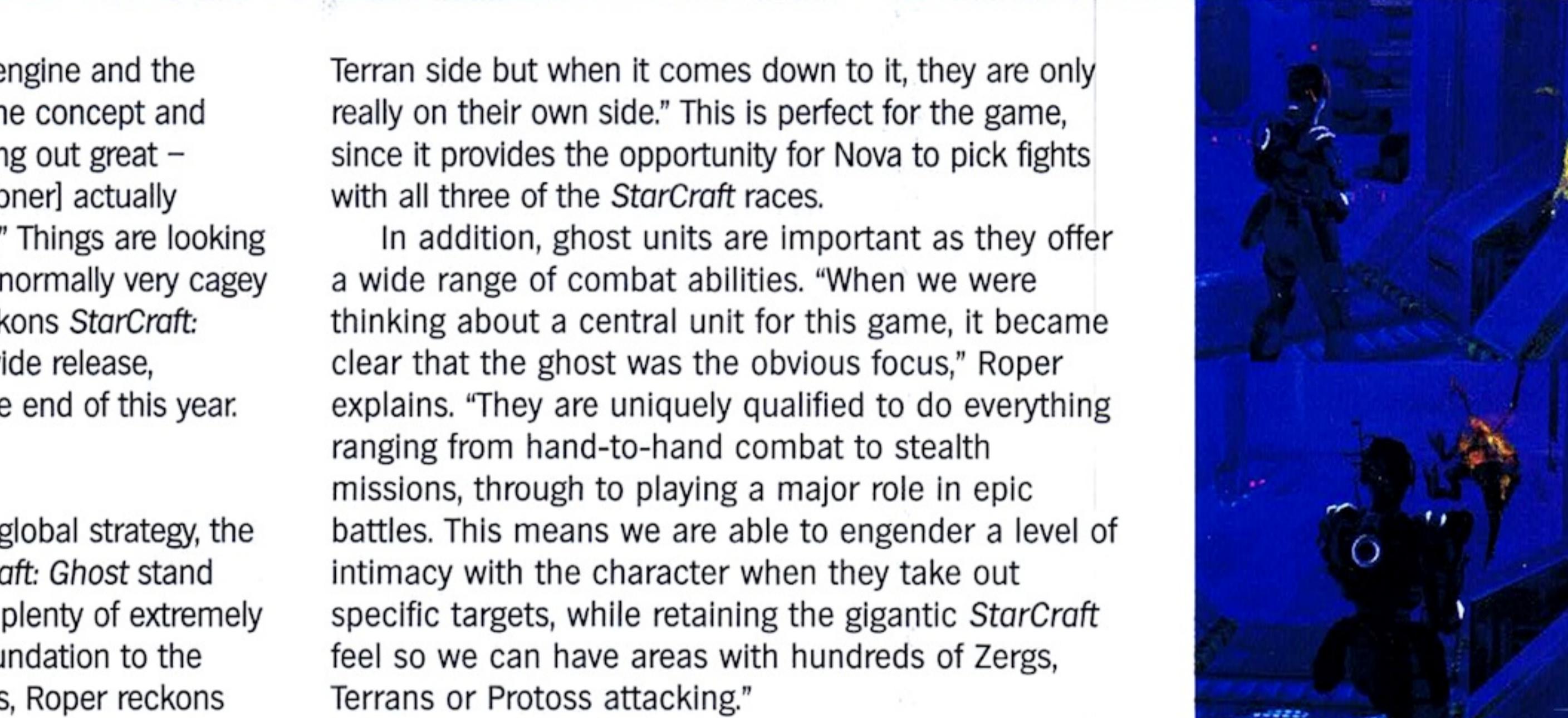
Aside from the talk of technology and global strategy, the key question is: what will make *StarCraft: Ghost* stand out from the competition? Sure, it has plenty of extremely cool elements, but what will be the foundation to the game? Drawing on the game's PC roots, Roper reckons the richness and detail of the *StarCraft* universe will pull in the console crowd.

"There are millions of gamers who already love the characters and stories of *StarCraft*, and I think they will enjoy exploring it from a third-person perspective," he says. "Obviously, we will be careful not to assume any knowledge that newcomers to *StarCraft* won't have, and the game will have lots of cinematics explaining what's going on – I think they will be drawn in."

The advantage of basing the game around Nova, a ghost unit, now becomes apparent. "The ghost units are a bit like the CIA," says Lagrave. "They are sort of on the



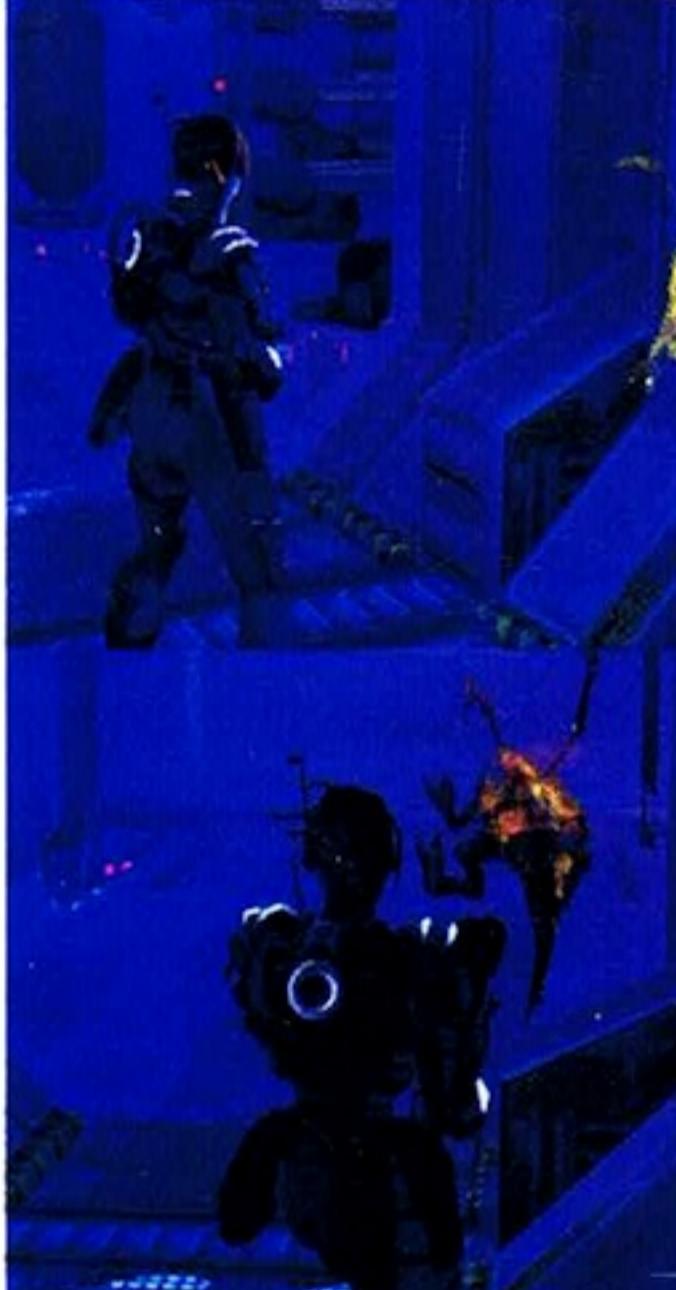
OUTDOOR PURSUIT Nova will fight in large outdoor battlefields and must help allies, as well as fulfil her own objectives.



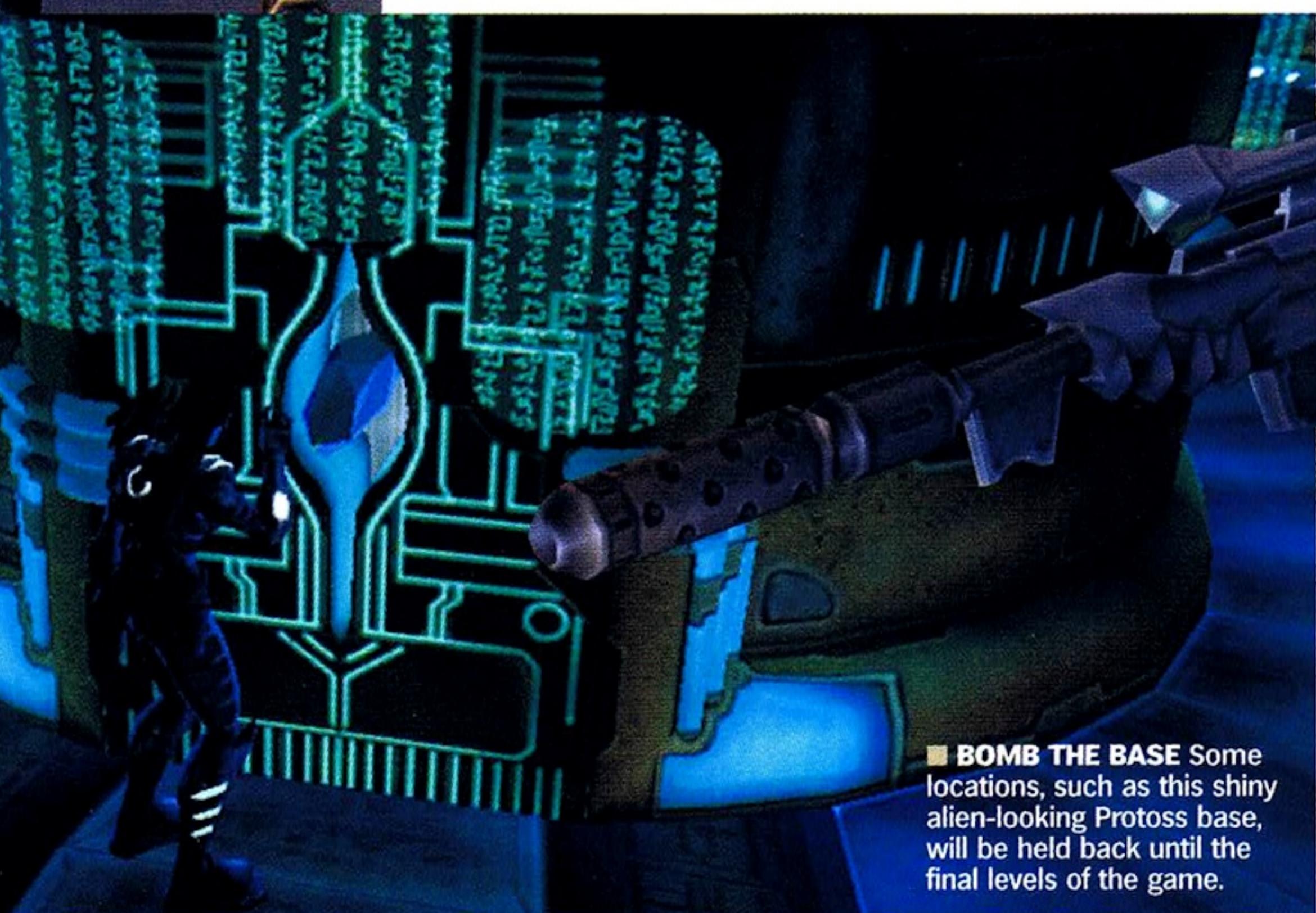
Terran side but when it comes down to it, they are only really on their own side." This is perfect for the game, since it provides the opportunity for Nova to pick fights with all three of the *StarCraft* races.

In addition, ghost units are important as they offer a wide range of combat abilities. "When we were thinking about a central unit for this game, it became clear that the ghost was the obvious focus," Roper explains. "They are uniquely qualified to do everything ranging from hand-to-hand combat to stealth missions, through to playing a major role in epic battles. This means we are able to engender a level of intimacy with the character when they take out specific targets, while retaining the gigantic *StarCraft* feel so we can have areas with hundreds of Zergs, Terrans or Protoss attacking."

And perhaps this will be the most crucial element of *StarCraft: Ghost* for Blizzard to get right. There are plenty of games in which a single character fights their way through seemingly insurmountable odds while using a selection of cool weapons and attributes. In contrast, there have been few, if any, games that have successfully incorporated a single character, complete with cool weapons and attributes, fighting coherently within a complete warzone. If Blizzard manages to pull this off in *StarCraft: Ghost*, then it will have undoubtedly become one of the top developers in the world. Watch this space... □



HOT SHOT Nova's infrared sight allows her to see through walls to detect the organic enemies.



BOMB THE BASE Some locations, such as this shiny alien-looking Protoss base, will be held back until the final levels of the game.



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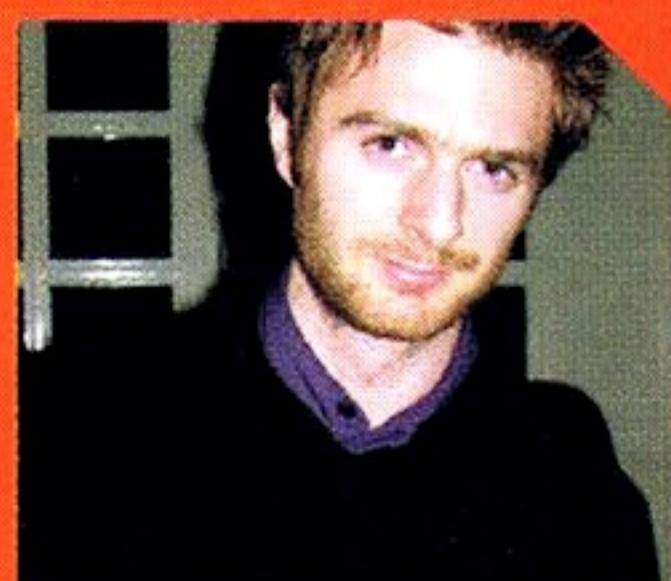
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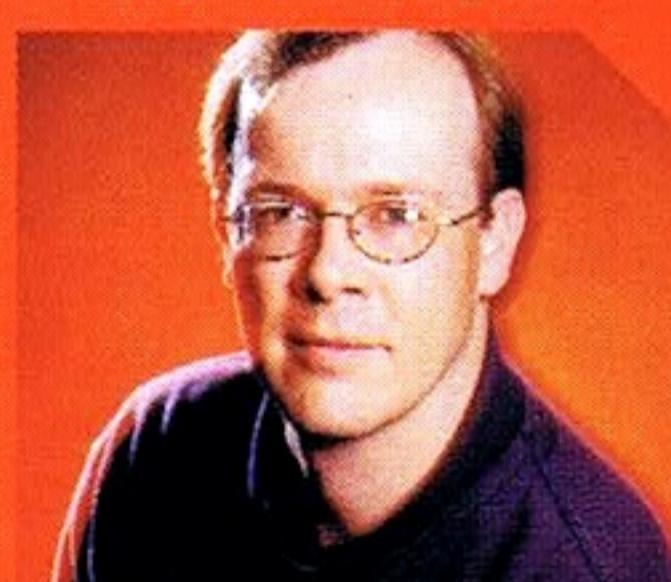
THE PLAYTESTERS



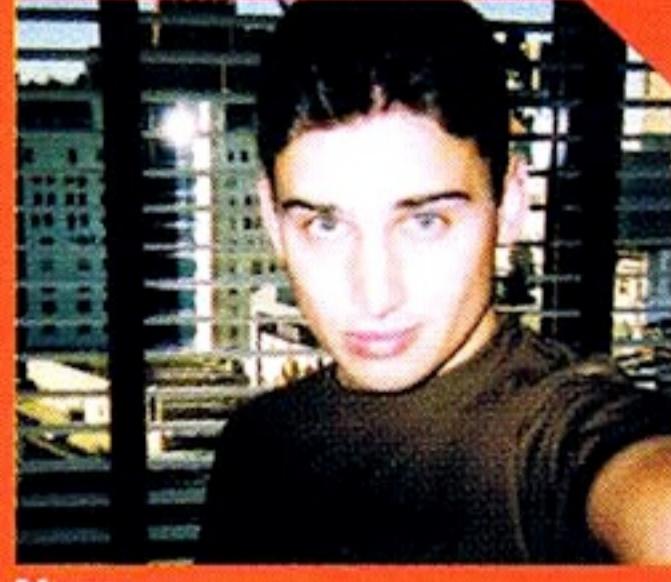
Name
Paul 'Death From Above' Fitzpatrick
Testing
Twisted Metal Black: Online, Tribes: Aerial Assault
Online gaming on PlayStation 2 will mean...
"Kissing goodbye to daylight once and for all."
Which PS2 franchise is aching to go online and why?
'TimeSplitters. Online deathmatches with the PS2 FPS king? Make this happen!'



Name
George 'Wet Job' Walter
Testing
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs
Online gaming on PlayStation 2 will mean...
"I'll have to move somewhere I can get broadband."
Which PS2 franchise is aching to go online and why?
"Obvious really. Pro Evolution Soccer. The best multiplayer game on PS2 goes massively multiplayer. That's progress."



Name
Rob 'Magic Level Seven' Smith
Testing
Everquest Online Adventures
Online gaming on PlayStation 2 will mean...
"Increased sales of keyboards."
Which PS2 franchise is aching to go online and why?
"Medal Of Honor. Imagine team-based missions set in those atmospheric MOH maps..."



Name
Mark 'Grab-N-Grind' Wyatt
Testing
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Online gaming on PlayStation 2 will mean...
"Mid-game insults thrown more efficiently over a large variety of countries. You pansies."
Which PS2 franchise is aching to go online and why?
"GTA: Vice City of course. Imagine a real city of crime inhabited solely by gamers looking to smash and grab."

GAME ONLINE



It won't be long until a whole world of online gaming opens up on PS2. But you shouldn't have to wait to discover what's in store. So armed with a PS2, a Network Adaptor and four of the big online games you'll be playing, OPS2 tasted and tested the future. Step right this way...

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

Developer: Neversoft
Release: Out now



■ **YANKING THEIR CHAINS** Online action hits the Net. God help the USA.

ONLINE ONLY?

Not at all. Play the full game, build your stats, get to know the levels and then take it to the online streets.

WHAT'S THIS THEN?

Skateboarding. If you think you've completed *Tony Hawk's 4* then it's time to think again. Take all of the skills and idiosyncrasies you've developed, and take them online as you pit your abilities against the world. Think of the multiplayer mode without the split-screen and against a bunch of complete strangers. Use the levels from the game's Career mode or even your own created levels and characters to really personalise your presence.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

You know Tony, and Tony knows skateboarding. His fourth instalment is based around accepting challenges from skaters and proving yourself over a number of missions and locations. Customisable everything, including boards, looks and stats mean that you mould your skater in your own image, or dress them up in a camp, flamboyant costume. The Network

■ **CHEWING THE PHAT** Rack up points or just chat. It's your choice.

Play mode in particular allows mass truck rucking in a variety of forms. Host a game and you get to choose the discipline, be it a Trick Attack, King Of The Hill, Graffiti, Score Challenge, Combo Mambo or any of a large variety. Talk about it with others or simply goad them with witty insights like "u suck!"

Features: 5/5

GETTING SET UP

As simple as your first ollie. Assuming you've already got a network configuration file on your Memory Card, getting connected is child's play. After that, the interfaces are as accessible as any Hawk's game. You'll be well on your way in no time.

Ease Of Use: 5/5

THE PLAYTEST

Having chosen the moniker of Online Aussie, just to let those Yanks know that they're in for something special, we embark. A quick stop in the accessories shop leaves our character frustratingly weak in the stats department, but we're sure raw skill will make up for that. Cowboy hat, camo T-shirt, cowhide backpack. Yup, the purists will be livid.

■ **TOP FLIGHT** So you think you're good at *THPS4*? Online you really can take on the world and prove it.

■ **LOOKIN' GOOD** And they said purple and camo wouldn't blend.

It's getting late for our American cousins but there are plenty of games to join in on the West Coast. Within minutes we've struck up a conversation with a 'girl' in cut-offs and a bra top called Milwaukee, who wants to exchange email addresses a little too urgently. Ever coy, we suggest less talk and more action – skating action.

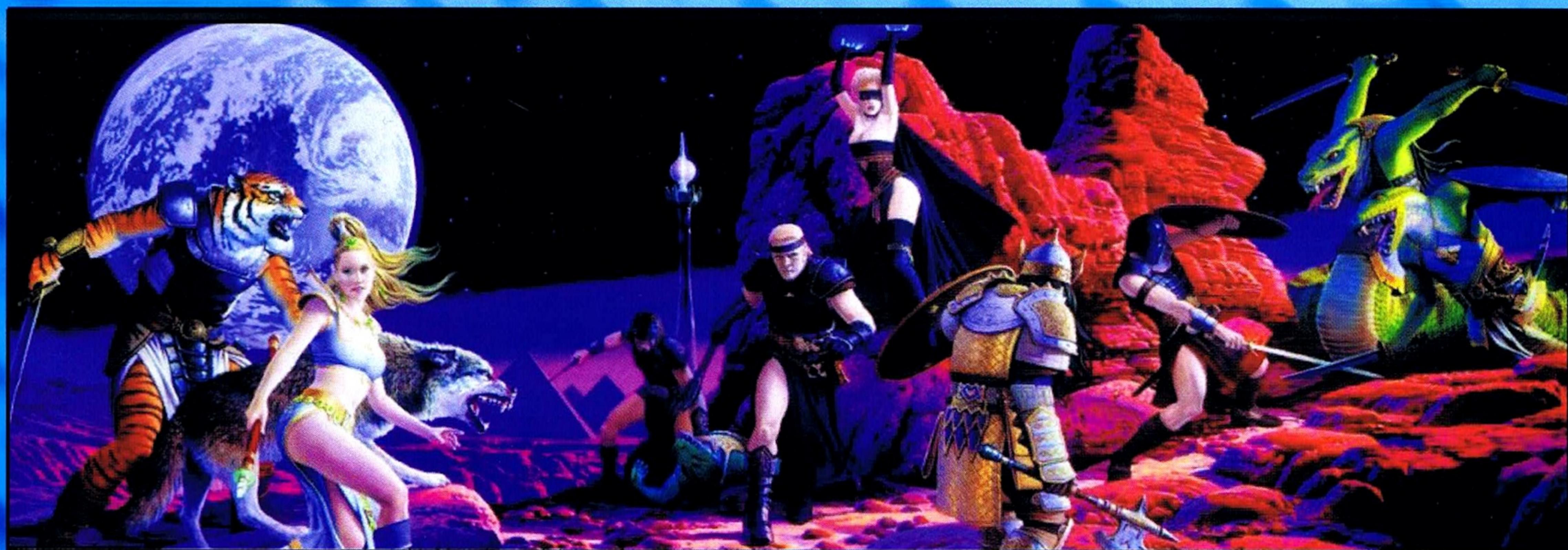
A change of location and we watch a Trick Attack (best score in two minutes) tapping away happily on the USB keyboard, letting the skaters know it's our first time and to be gentle. Striking up a conversation with a 'girl' called Kit Angi Q we realise the tremendously worrying potential for flirting with strangers. A quick freeskate and it's our turn to join in. Some of the eight skaters are very good, but a decent player will by no means be outclassed. The worst thing to deal with is the idea that up to seven others are watching, waiting for you to stack it doing something simple.

A feeling of community creeps in several rounds later as we discuss where to go next and change locations. A narrow victory for OPS2 sees us embroiled in a transatlantic slanging match with one of the little whiney online gits. This is great.

CONCLUSION

The feeling that you're skating against others really is addictive. *Tony Hawk's 4* is a game that's always open to creativity and expression, but it really shines here. Wait until you beat seven other Hawk wannabes for the first time. There's no better validation of your 'skillz'.

OVERALL ANTICIPATION
4/5



EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

Developer: Sony Online Entertainment
Release: TBC

ONLINE ONLY?

Yes

WHAT'S THIS THEN?

The PC's blockbuster MMORPG, EverQuest, is a certifiable games industry phenomenon. Some 430,000 subscribers fork out over \$12.95 a month to Sony Online for the pleasure of wandering the world of Norrath via their PCs. EQOA brings the same experience to the PS2 with a persistent world setting, AI-driven NPCs dishing out quests, and rats by the gazillion to slay.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

You get to play alongside hundreds of other real players – decide for yourself whether that's a good thing. Clans, guilds, loose associations and true friendships are formed. Hundreds of players gather

simultaneously on one server, spread throughout the world. Your characters are stored and saved for you to resume your ongoing adventures, seeking out new items, new weapons, adding spells to your arsenal or trading for cash. With a keyboard, chatting with fellow players (and even the NPCs), is simple, but you'll have more limited communication options if you're stuck with the controller defaults.

Features: 3/5

GETTING SET UP

Know how to set up your Network Adaptor? That's the hardest part of getting hooked up to EQOA. Once you're in the game, character creation can take up to 30 minutes if you're picky about race, class, eye colour or complexion details. Once in the game world, you've got to get to know your way around – and that takes

time. Wandering off by yourself away from safe areas can result in a quick death (and subsequent forced restart at your point of entry).

Ease Of Use: 4/5 – there's a lot to do, but it's pretty straightforward.

THE PLAYTEST

So you're online. In a massively multiplayer game. Opportunities abound. A character runs across your path – it's another real person off to sell junk they looted from the corpses of sword fodder, or returning to an NPC with news of a completed quest. Wherever you start in the world, it feels big. There's a lot to see and do, and a lot to learn about the mechanics.

Quests are simple FedEx-style affairs in the early stages – deliver X to Y and bring Z back to X. But that path from X to Y can lead different ways, and if those

non-scripted adventures are fun, you'll want to pay the subscription price. It's easy to get lost and you can expect to find yourself dead pretty sharpish when you wander somewhere you're not ready to handle. Then you've got the other players. Do you like socialising? Get a keyboard and chat away. Keyboard-less or a loner? Then you've a harder job ahead.

Emphasis has been placed on quests that require you to group with others. By level seven you'll be looking to make friends to watch your back while you try to secure a quest item from a creature. You'll then be obliged to do the same for them – forming a mob, in the parlance of the game world.

However the socials work out, it's all about getting those experience points. Once you're attached to the development of your character, it's an addictive pastime.

MMORPGS 4EVA!
Welcome to PS2's first Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game.



ONLINE PLAYTEST



SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS

Developer: Zipper Interactive
Release: May

ONLINE ONLY?

No. There's a hefty single-player game too.

WHAT'S THIS THEN?

A PS2-exclusive title developed by Zipper Interactive for SCEA, SOCOM: US Navy SEALs puts you in the shoes of a highly trained special forces operative. It's not dissimilar to the hugely-popular PC network game Counter-Strike, but it's played in the third-person – think TimeSplitters 2 for Metal Gear fans.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

It's the one with the funky headset. Don't get too excited, there'll be no screaming obscenities at SniperKlaus from the Czech Republic. What you can do, though, is trigger preset commands to your online opponents or offline AI team-mates through voice commands. Offline, it's a mission-based tactical military game putting you in voice control of a set of heavily armed

SEALS, not unlike PC games *Rainbow Six* and *Raven Shield*. Online, it's Deathmatch, Capture The Flag or Hostage Rescuing – although it generally pans out as two teams battling for supremacy, ignoring the objective entirely. It's broadband only, so lag is non-existent and can support up to 16 players at a time.

Features: 3/5

GETTING SET UP

From the opening menu you select 'online' then proceed to enter a name (you'll be known by this moniker to other players online, so make sure it's as stupid as possible) and a password that saves to the Memory Card. The next screen flashes up server news. When we were playing, there was notification of server downtime in the States that day. You then pick a country, enter a 'briefing room' and join a game. Here you'll have the chance to select characters and choose your team – SEALs

or Terrorists. It's also the place to chat or trade insults (press **Ⓐ** and insert a text message). After a ten-second load you'll be in the thick of the action. And unless you've played it before, you've probably just been nailed.

Ease Of Use: 4/5

THE PLAYTEST

Don't expect to pick this up instantly – some of the US players have had *SOCOM* since August 2002 and are more than capable of making you feel painfully inadequate. After about three hours of testing in various maps, against players in England (the most balanced), Eastern Europe (the most hectic) and East Coast US (the most jammy) our best score tally was two kills. Pathetic, really. In our defence we found it quite difficult to ascertain who our enemies were, especially in the thick of a firefight involving six other players and a lot of jungle fog.

Graphically, it's slightly rough around the edges but we'll forgive it due to maps being large, varied and providing some brilliant hiding places. There's also lighting and weather effects to build atmosphere. Importantly, it makes for compulsive playing. You'll quickly find yourself wanting to master it just to nail that bastard *Dirty_old_man* and then give him a mouthful in the chat room later.

Unfortunately, the voice recognition feature is sadly lost in the cordite-filled ether of testosterone-fuelled deathmatching. You could always try laying down the gauntlet and issuing a few 'tactical' commands, but you'll more than likely end up getting shot or being voted off. We reckon this function will come into its own more when you're playing alongside a group of mates instead of complete strangers whose sole objective is to prove themselves as king fragger. Can we go and play it again now?

COMING, READY OR NOT... SOCOM is already a big hit in the States and its fans are serious!

AT EASE, SOLDIER
Getting hooked up to SOCOM really couldn't be easier.



CONCLUSION
Potentially life consuming – there were already hundreds of US gamers online at 6pm Aussie time. That's 4am on the East Coast – some dedication. We're looking forward to sleepless nights when PS2 goes online.

OVERALL ANTICIPATION
4/5



TRIBES: AERIAL ASSAULT

Developer: Sierra Entertainment

UK Release: June

ONLINE ONLY?

No. Online and offline elements.

WHAT'S THIS THEN?

Tribes: Aerial Assault is a PS2 companion to two successful PC siblings and is set in the 40th Century, where neobarbarian tribes of humans battle against each other and the genetically modified BioDerm Hordes for control of the 'Wilderzone', blah, blah, blah. To put it another way, this is jetpack 'n' blaster-assisted deathmatch chaos, perfectly pitched at action-hungry network newbies.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Unlike some network games in the pipeline, TAA has a fully functioning offline campaign complete with training missions and multiplayer modes as well as a meaty

online component. Once you're set up you have a choice of five online mission types: Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, Capture The Flag, Capture And Hold and Hunters. Deathmatch and CTF are pretty straightforward. Meanwhile, Capture And Hold is a team-based assault on the opposing side's HQ, and Hunters is a fusion of CTF and Deathmatch. Every time you smoke an opponent they drop a flag. The more flags you gather and return safely to the Nexus, the badder your ass.

Features: 4/5

GETTING SET UP

Once you've gone through the initial setup process for your Network Adaptor (see Plug And Play) and saved the settings on a Memory Card, getting online with TAA couldn't be simpler. Select 'Network

Setting' from the main menu. Check that your PS2's network settings file is highlighted and select 'Connect'. Better still, highlight 'Autoconnect' and from then on you'll never have to visit this menu again.

Ease Of Use: 5/5

THE PLAYTEST

Having got a taster of TAA's controls via the offline training missions, we highlight the single-player Online mode. The first screen takes us through character selection. We opt for a lizard-like BioDerm with heavy armour and a Fusion Mortar. Having christened our scaly baby Hamoki we move on to game selection. It's 3am in the States but even at that ungodly hour there are eight online games in full swing. We choose a 16-player Deathmatch that's just kicked off and within ten seconds

we're on the battlefield and being mortared by a bitch called DyingLight, hovering in one of TAA's vehicles, the Hammer Bomber.

Thankfully we respawn inside our base and have time to visit an Inventory Station. These equip you with just about any hardware you desire. We desire big f*cking guns and a side order of revenge. Then it's outside to try out our jetpack. There's no lag or slowdown at all as we speed over a huge map. Damn, this is fun. We spot a red triangle in the valley below. Hal It's DyingLight. He's on foot and at our mercy. Three pops with the Spinfusor weapon and OPS2 notches up its first kill. With a victory roar, courtesy of the D-pad's simple speech buttons, we zoom over the hills and off to the enemy team's base. We decide to start a vote to change the map. Why? Because we can! Vote carried. This is awesome...

CONCLUSION

You really can't overestimate the thrill of videogame battling against real opponents. Characters emerge, scores get settled and victories taste oh so sweet. You're going to love this.

OVERALL ANTICIPATION
5/5

PLUG AND PLAY?

So just how easy is it to set up the Network Adaptor? We gave a the adaptor we bought in the US to one of our tech-heads and stood well back.

The hardest bit of getting online was opening the Network Adaptor's box. Once you've screwed the adaptor into place at the back of your PS2 and plugged it in to your broadband socket (you did remember to get yourself hooked up with a broadband internet provider first, right?) pop the Start-Up disc into the tray.

1. From the main menu, select 'ISP Setup'. You'll be told you need a Memory Card with 137Kb free to save the Network Configuration File. Make sure you do so.

2. Register your Network Adaptor. This is purely for Sony's Consumer Services. Name, Age, Email Address. Job done.

3. Give your Network Configuration File a name. This really is quite easy, isn't it?

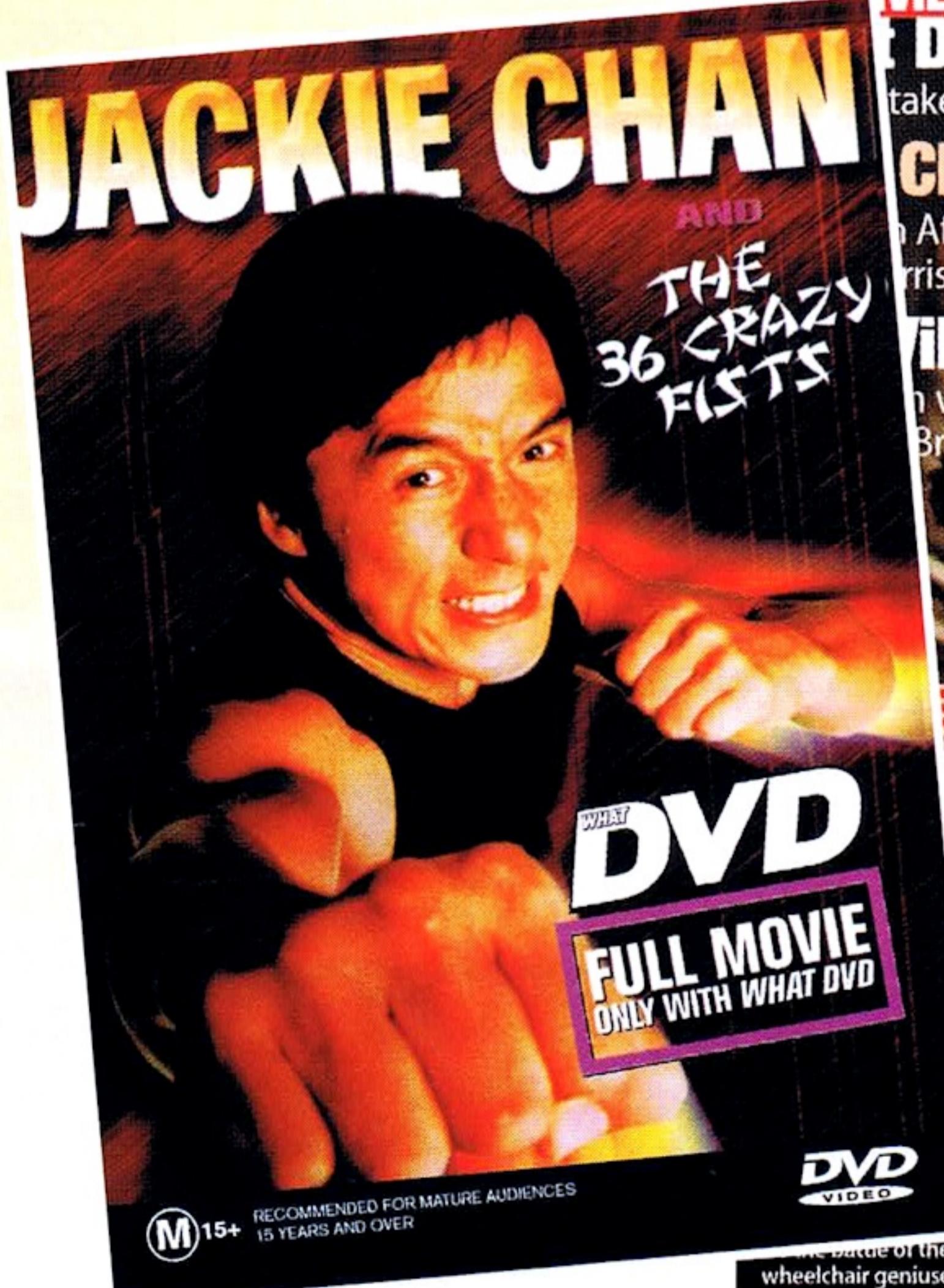
4. Enter your Internet Service Provider's (ISP's) settings. You have two choices here: Automatic Settings and Manual Settings. Automatic Settings should do everything for you.*

*Manual Settings requires you to enter five 12-figure ISP addresses by hand. Sounds tricky? Don't worry. Simply give your broadband ISP a call and they'll be happy to give you the information. And remember: once you've saved the settings to your Memory Card, you're set up for good.

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Village People
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REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10 Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10 A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10 Highly recommended
- 07/10 Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10 Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10 An average game
- 04/10 Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10 Extremely disappointing
- 02/10 To be avoided
- 01/10 Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.

GOLD

PlayStation 2

SILVER

PlayStation 2

BRONZE

PlayStation 2

The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. The only game to get Gold is MGS2. Too right!

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!

The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

media
DVD / MUSIC / MEDIA

DVD RELEASES 076
Road to Perdition / Signs / The Bourne Identity / Vandread / The Long Kiss Goodnight.



DEF JAM VENDETTA ... 058

Become a playa in the most brutal wrestling game yet!

SHINOBI 062

Sega's classic ninja slash 'em up cuts a slice of PS2.

VEXX 064

Are Ratchet, Clank, Sly Racoon, Jak and Daxter going to be out of their jobs?

NBA STREET VOLUME 2 066

EA Big takes street hoops to a new level!

JURASSIC PARK: PROJECT GENESIS 068

NBA 2K3 069

NHL 2K3 070

DARK ANGEL 071

072 MYSTIC HEROES

072 FISHERMAN'S CHALLENGE

073 EVERBLUE 2

073 SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL

074 BEN HUR

074 DAKAR 2

075 ZAPPER: ONE WICKED CRICKET

075 CHESSMASTER

076 DISNEY GOLF

076 LEGO ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS

077 EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING

077 G1 JOCKEY 3



It takes a little more to make a



PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: AKI
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1 - 4
OUT: JUNE
WEB SITE: WWW.EA.COM/EASPORTSBIG/GAMES
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

BACK STORY
While the Japanese developer of Def Jam Vendetta, AKI, may be foreign to some (no pun intended), those more familiar with its work will recall that AKI created the highly acclaimed WCW vs. NWO series on the now defunct Nintendo 64 console. It's well accepted that this series is one of the greatest of all time. AKI's awesome grappling system returns in DJV to make its 128-bit debut, and does it in style.

DEF JAM VENDETTA

EA BIG 'opes you like jammin' with the bad ass rappers...

X Def Jam Vendetta puts you in the role of a small-time gangsta street fighter who's fellow G, Manny, needs to call in a favour. Not one of those 'grab a bottle of milk on the way home' favours – the serious and potentially fatal kind. Manny's been borrowing money from D-Mob, and the gangland kingpin is looking to collect. Manny was paying back the debt by fighting in the lower tiers of D-Mob's fighting tournament, Def Jam, but a particularly brutal contest has sidelined him with a broken arm. Manny now needs you, his bestest buddy, to fight in his place, or face the prospect of sleeping with the fishes.

While the squared circle of Def Jam is a dangerous place, and the battles are fought for life and love, there are even higher stakes – arseloads of cash and stunningly hot chicks with dubious morals. With visions of bling-bling and breasts swirling through your mind, you step into the ring. To get to the top you'll have to go through D-Mob and his armies of gangsta rapper heavies, including DMX, N.O.R.E. and the Wu-Tang Clan. The bell sounds, and your battle begins.

SINGLE PLAYA

The solo game allows you to pick from a cast of four characters, each with different levels of speed, strength and technique. As you win matches, you can spend your hard-earned fight club cash on improving your character's attributes, which you'll need to do if you want to have any hope of progressing through the later levels. Matches have no fixed time limit, and can only be won by pinfall in the ring, by knockout or by a submission anywhere. Matches are linked together by well-scripted

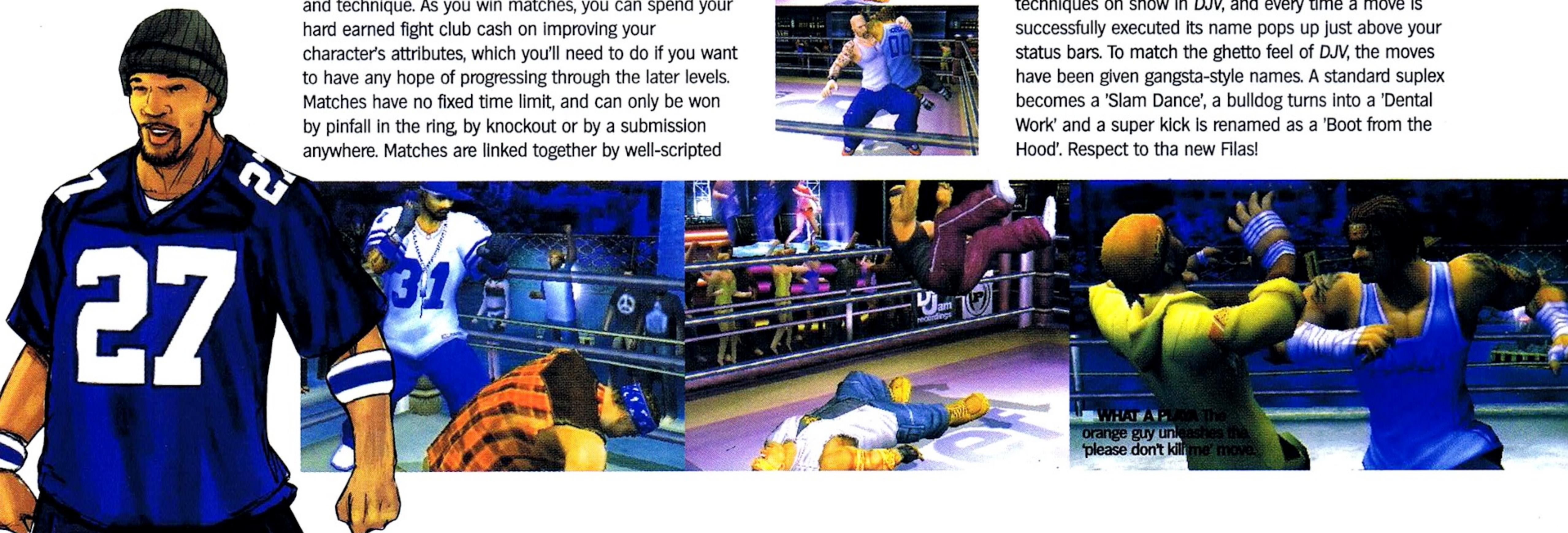


cut-scenes using punchy dialogue. The battles take place in a number of seedy underground nightclubs, open rooftops and backwater blocks, although the action is restricted to the ring and the immediate perimeter.

Inside the squared circle, you'll come across all manner of freaky Gs, including plodding powerhouses, martial arts masters and submission specialists, all the way to lithe luchadores. All told, there are more than forty characters to defeat and unlock throughout the exhaustive single-player campaign before you can use them in multiplayer encounters.

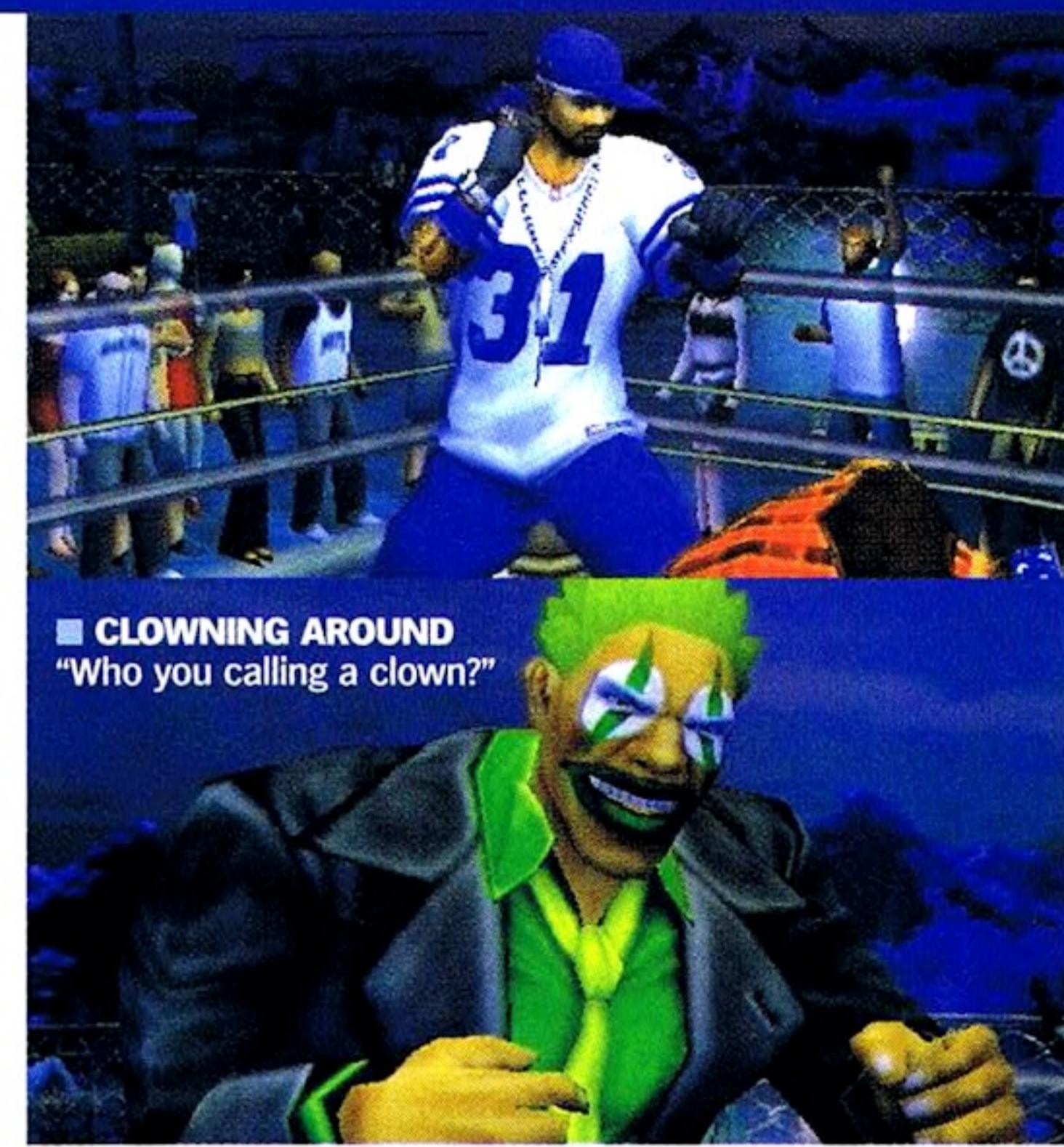
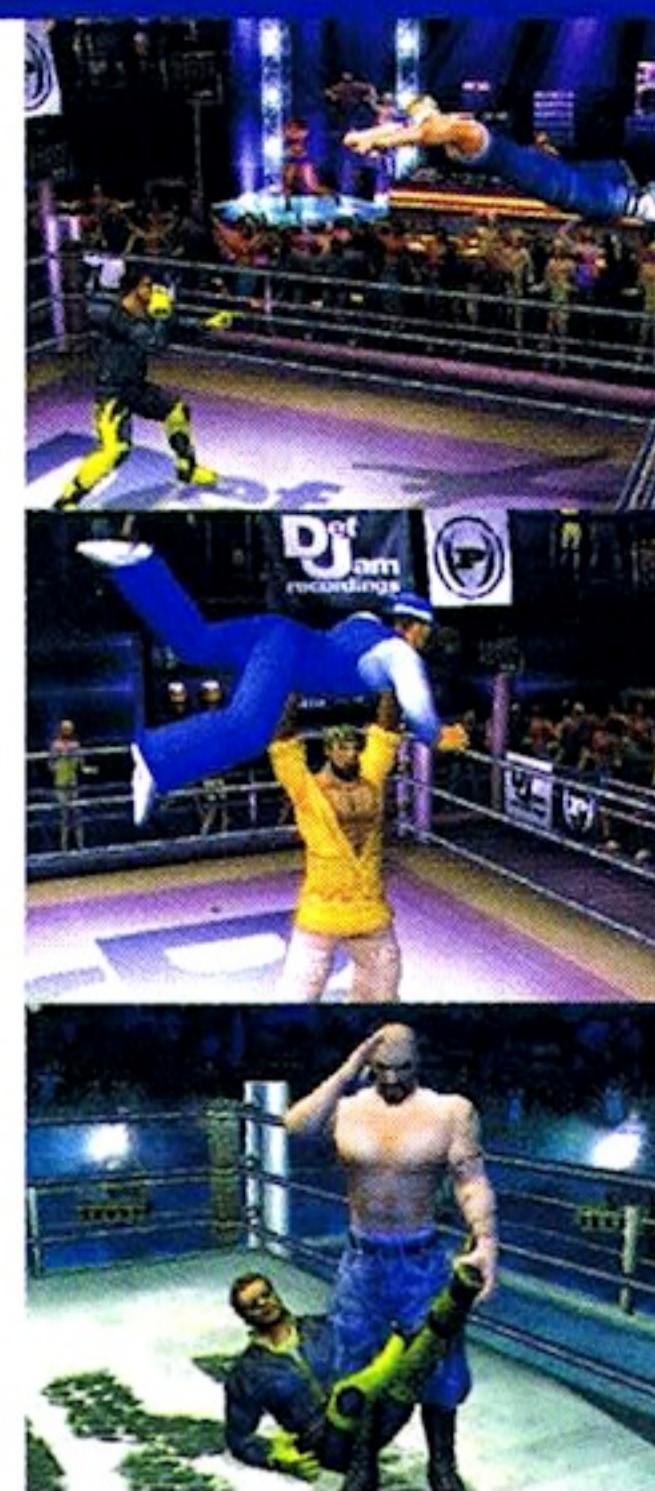
The controls seem fairly elementary to start with; the d-pad or left stick is used for movement, and there are buttons for striking, grappling and running. Everything's nice and simple for beginners to pick up. When you add directional input, button combos, frontal and rear attacks and the difference between button taps and presses to the equation, this gives each character an impressive arsenal of pain to unleash on their opponent. On top of this, there are reversals, escape moves and context-sensitive moves. This arsenal results in a wide variety of intense and nerve-racking matches with offensive control going back and forth between the combatants – just like the real thing.

There's a veritable encyclopaedia of wrestling techniques on show in DJV, and every time a move is successfully executed its name pops up just above your status bars. To match the ghetto feel of DJV, the moves have been given gangsta-style names. A standard suplex becomes a 'Slam Dance', a bulldog turns into a 'Dental Work' and a super kick is renamed as a 'Boot from the Hood'. Respect to the new Filas!





NUT BUSTER A lot like the Spine Buster except it busts your nuts.



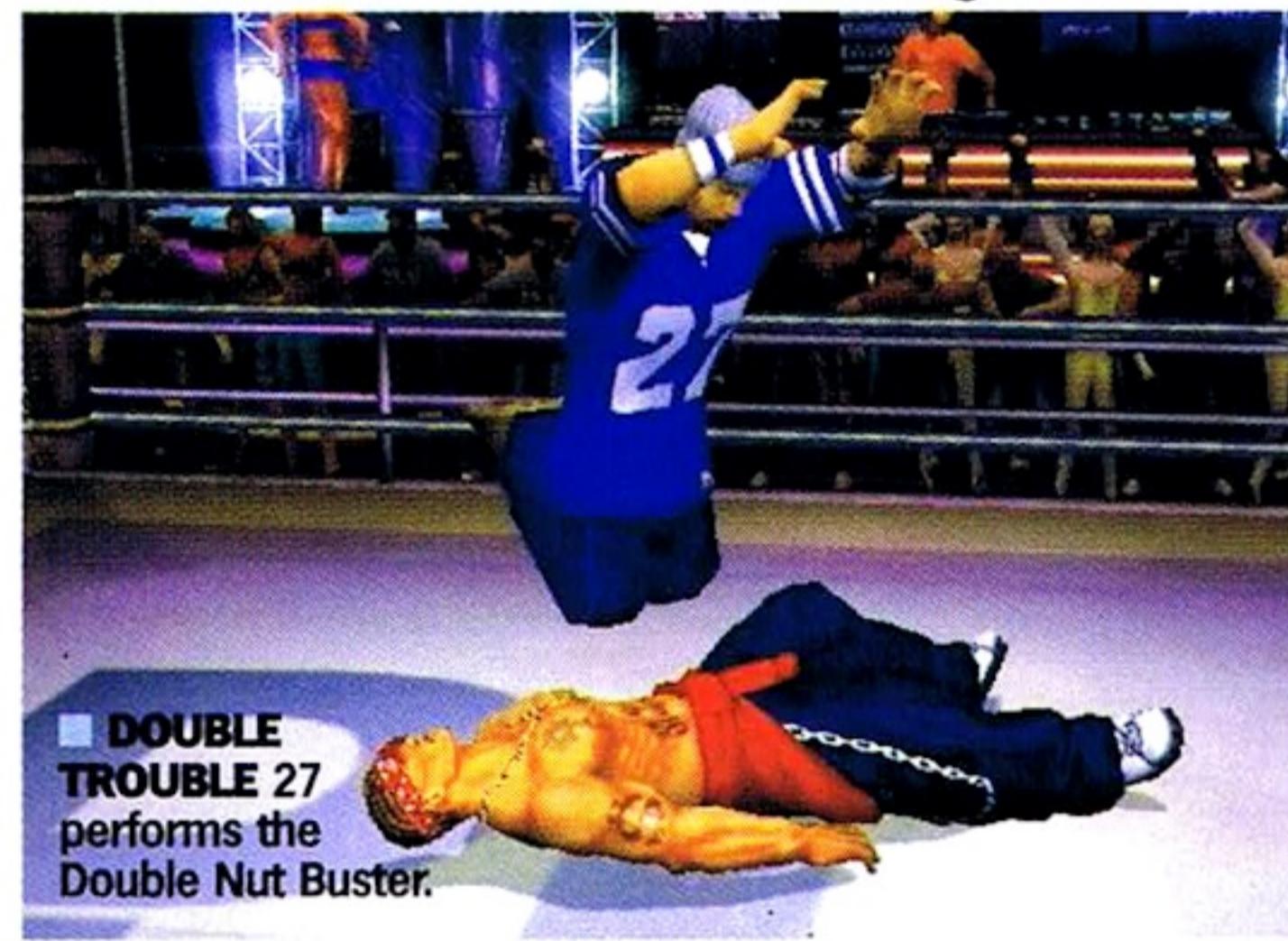
CLOWNING AROUND
"Who you calling a clown?"



SHIRT AND SWEET
"Give me back my shirt sleeves!"



CHAINS OF LOVE You don't want to be caught in his.



DOUBLE TROUBLE 27 performs the Double Nut Buster.

POON-TANG CLAN IS IN THE HOUSE

As you work your way up the ranks of *Def Jam*, you'll also attract the attention of some prime poon-tang. With so many hot chicks vying for your affections, fame and fat wallet, the claws are bound to come out! Your future girlfriend is determined by the bitchin' babe left standing when the bell rings. Ah, the way things ought to be...



12-GUAGE ACTION

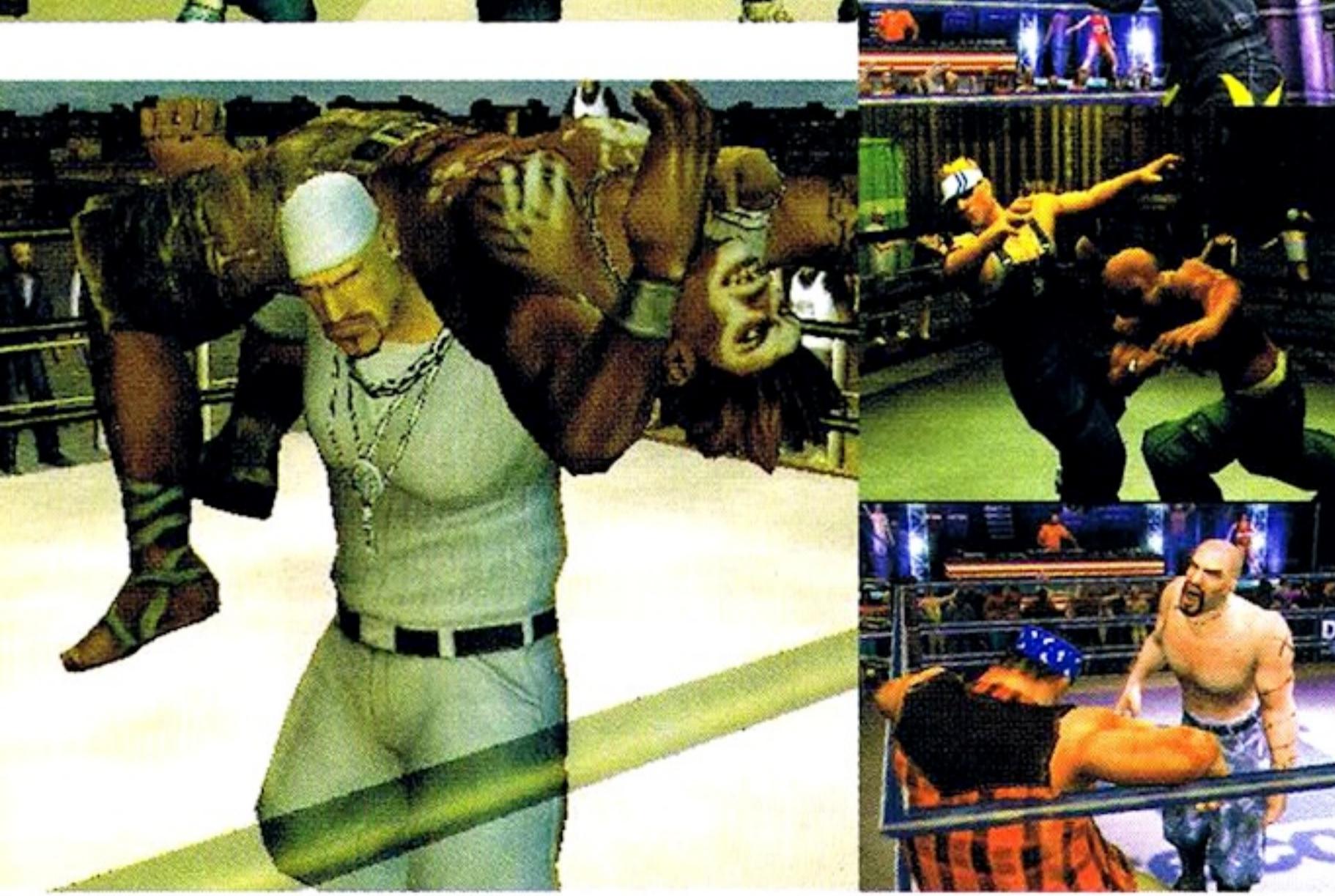
Another great thing about *Def Jam Vendetta* is the plethora of status indicators that keep the player aware of exactly how the match is going. Firstly, there's the obvious health bar that wears down with attacks, and fills as you have the opportunity to rest. As you get beaten up, you're in more danger of being pinned clean or even knocked out cold. Whenever you're locked in a hold or covered in a pinfall, a white bar appears that you have to fill by pressing the buttons furiously. For keeping track of the toll taken by submission moves, a limb health bar appears to show how much more punishment that body part can tolerate before the competitor is forced to submit. Last of all, there's a crowd meter nestled above your health bar that fills as you successfully execute moves and taunt your opponent, and empties as you get smacked around. When your crowd meter is filled, it will flash, indicating that one more taunt will send you into a 'Blazin'' mode that allows you to unleash your finishing moves on your battered opposition. Launching into Blazin' mode causes the music to take a more frantic shift and the camera to blur momentarily as it rings in a new age of pain. Landing your finisher treats you to a slow-motion execution, shot from several different angles to emphasise the ballet of violence and give your foe a good sense of the joyful, and possibly maiming, gift he is about to receive. Most finishers will have you wincing in

empathy as the agony is dealt out, although a few of them do look a little corny.

The characters in *DJV* deserve special mention. While retaining a cartoonish quality, the wrestlers are particularly detailed, with well-defined facial features, crisply textured clothing and intricate tattoos – they're a joy to behold. It doesn't stop there, though. Not only do the *Def Jam* participants look good, but they also move well. Whether they're sailing through the air taking a massive back body drop, firing off a spinebuster slam or scrabbling for the ropes to escape a submission, the characters are so lovingly animated, you'd swear you're watching a pay-per-view match. To add to the effect, the usage of camera angles places even more emphasis on the vicious struggles on the canvas by zooming in at appropriate moments and taking tight shots to show the grimaces of pain.

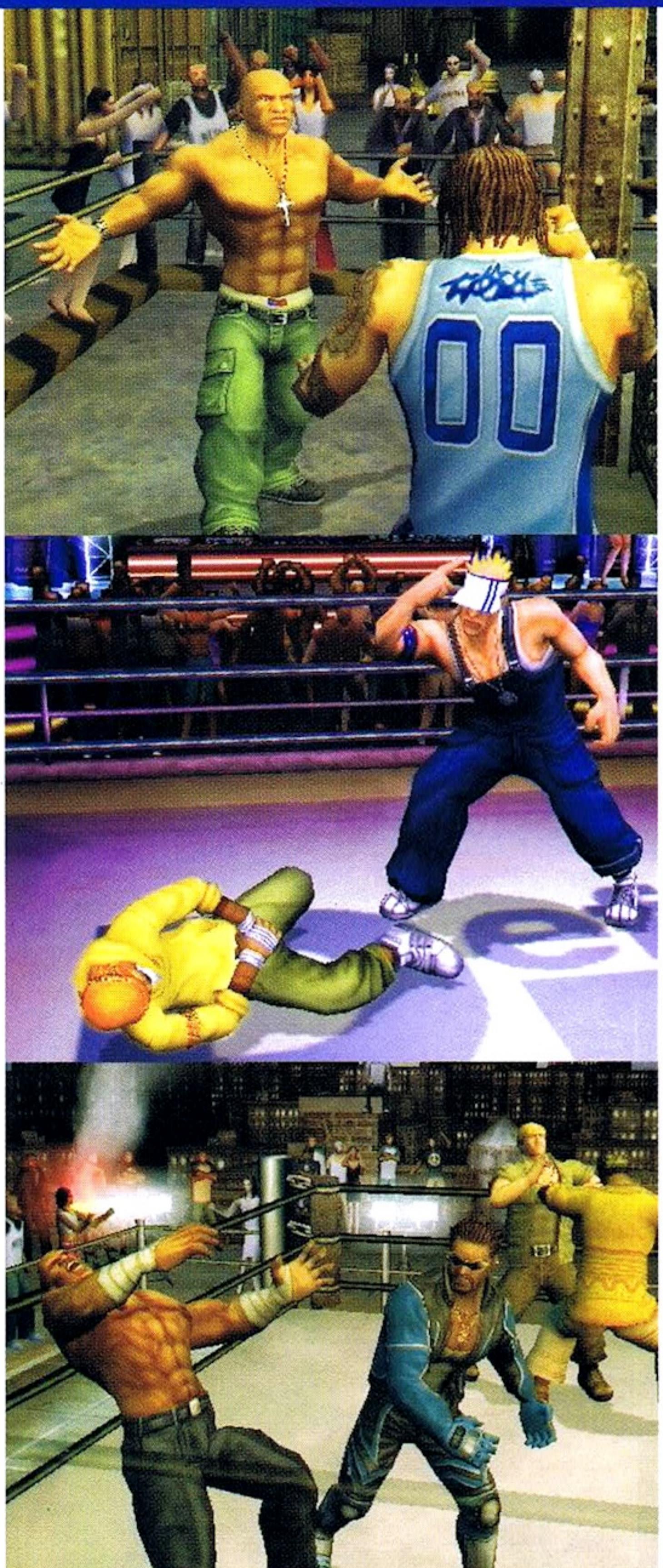
YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?

Backing tracks include the hip-hop stylings of Comp, DMX, Public Enemy and ONXY. These tracks lay down the funky tunes on menus and between levels, then retreat into backbeats and samples during matches. This way, the emphasis is placed on the grunts, groans and impacts, and it doesn't detract from the action or sully the lyrical waxings. The crowd in attendance oohs and ahhs along with powerful hits and even boos when their favourite playa gets pounded. Occasional quips from the swift MC also add to the atmosphere.

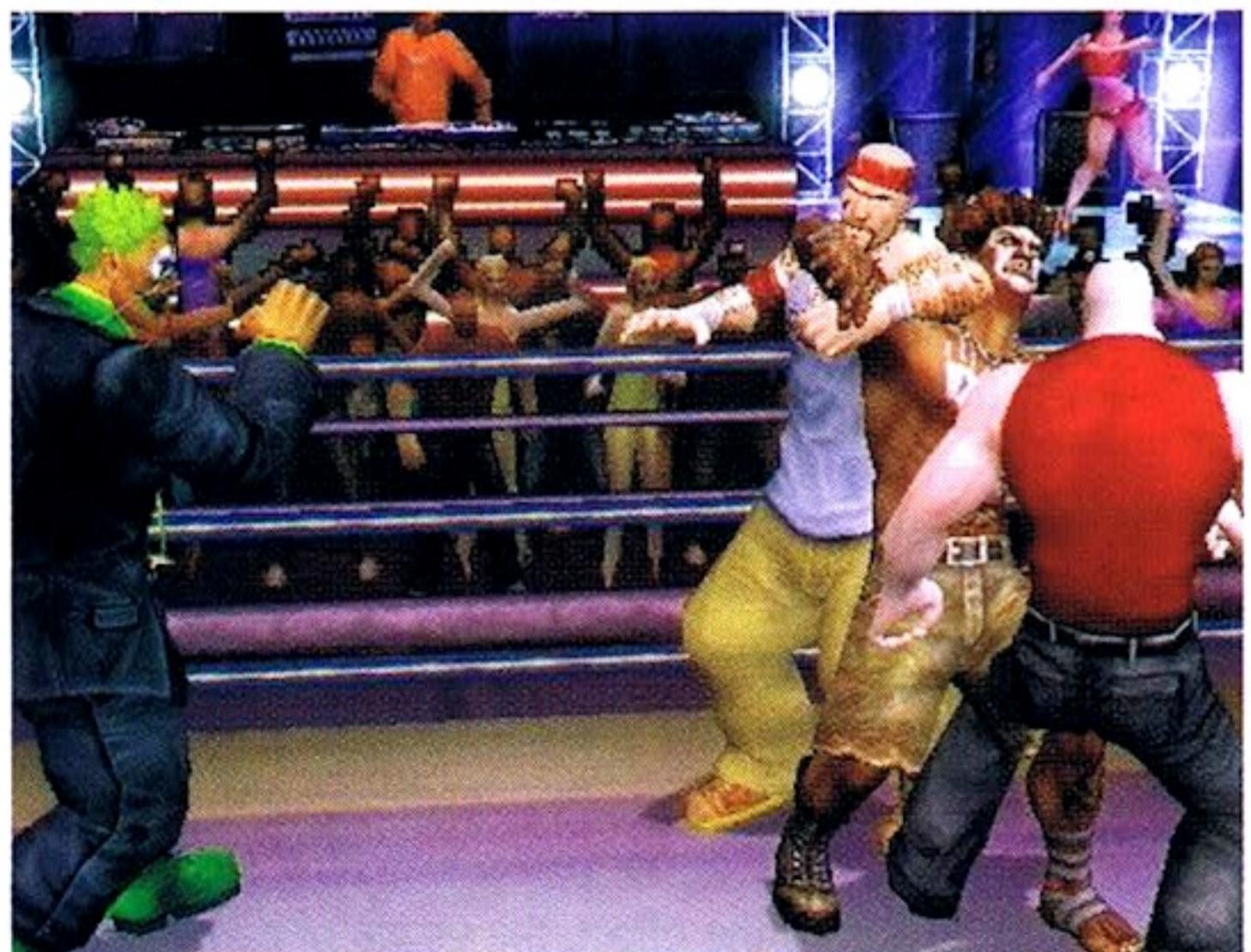


It takes a little more to make a

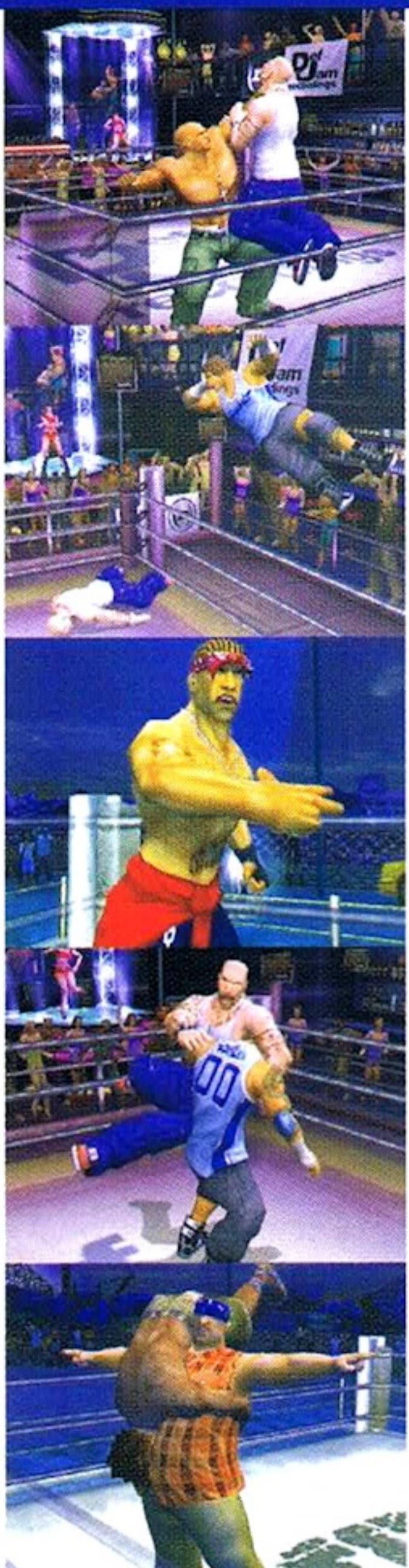
Champion®



■ SO TRANSPARENT The ropes disappear to let you see the fight.



■ HENRY ROLLINS "That's it – just roll with the pain."



WU-TANG: KICKIN' IT SHAOLIN STYLE

DJV isn't the Wu-Tang Clan's first videogame appearance – that honour goes to the appropriately titled PSOne game: *Wu-Tang: Taste the Pain*. WT:TP was essentially a 3D fighter, based on the never-released *Thrill Kill* engine, that supported up to four players. You could duke it out with clannars like Ol' Dirty Bastard and Ghost Face Killah, and even finish them off with *Mortal Kombat*-style fatalities.



■ SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER "How long do we have to keep dancing like this?"

→ Where *Def Jam Vendetta* falls short of the other grappling greats is in its not so extensive list of options. While there's a large cast of characters to choose from, each with individual styles, most wrestling games bring an entire create-a-wrestler mode, which allows you to import your favorites and is limited only by your imagination. This problem becomes even more apparent once the single player game is completed and all unlockable characters are released (no small feat). There are only a handful of different modes to choose from, while *SmackDown* offers a veritable smorgasbord of match types. Another glaring omission is the lack of chairs, tables or other weaponry in a game that otherwise preaches total brutality.

Between the sublimely animated carnage and the television-style camera angles and replays, it's easy to look past the facade of pro-wrestling and get caught up in a gritty underground *Fight Club*-like arena. The union between mega-publisher EA and wrestling giant AKI is a very happy one, and despite some disappointments, the result is a highly enjoyable game. Wrestling enthusiasts owe it to themselves to get their hands on this straight away, and it's well worth a look for everyone else. □ Nick O'Shea

DEF JAM VENDETTA

Why we'd buy it:

- DJV is the true heir of the cool WCW Vs. NWO wrestling titles!
- Wicked-good hip-hop soundtrack
- Brutal wrestling action with a solid plot

Why we'd leave it:

- Difficult to relate to because it lacks the WWE stars
- Single-player AI can be cheap
- Lack of options will doubtlessly affect longevity

Graphics	Characters are great, but backgrounds are a little flat	08
Sound	Screams and snapping sinew backed by wicked beats	09
Gameplay	Superb grappling engine with the speed taken up	09
Life span	Lots of characters to unlock, but not many options	07

Some more options would have made this a true champion, but it's still a worthy contender.

08

OFFICIAL VERDICT

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BRONZE

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

■ GHOSTBUSTERS Hotsuma's ghost image distracts his enemies.



SHINOBI

Sega's popular ninja title comes hacking and slashing out of the past!

PUBLISHER: SONY
DEVELOPER: SEGA
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: MAY
WEB SITE: WWW.SEGA.COM/GAMES/SEGAI/IMMERSION.JHTML?PRODID=10083
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ BACK STORY

Shinobi was one of Sega's biggest titles way back in 1987. It was a hit at both the arcades and on Sega's Master System and, with the possible exception of Sonic the Hedgehog, is one of the company's most fondly remembered series.



Any gamer with a bit of experience under their belt will be familiar with the *Shinobi* series. Beginning its life as a coin-op that graced arcades the world over, it has since been translated onto numerous platforms and spawned plenty of sequels. As with many games from that bygone era, the eighties, *Shinobi* has now been 'reimagined' using next-gen capabilities and modern gaming philosophies, but has all this new technology sapped the simplistic joy from this fondly remembered classic?

Thankfully, no. At its heart *Shinobi* is the same game it was all those years ago. For those unfamiliar with the title, the premise is basically this: You are a Ninja (although oddly in this new version your name is not *Shinobi*, it's Hotsuma), you have at your disposal an assortment of deadly weapons and acrobatic skills. You must employ said weapons and skills in the hasty slaughter of a series of increasingly difficult evil doers.

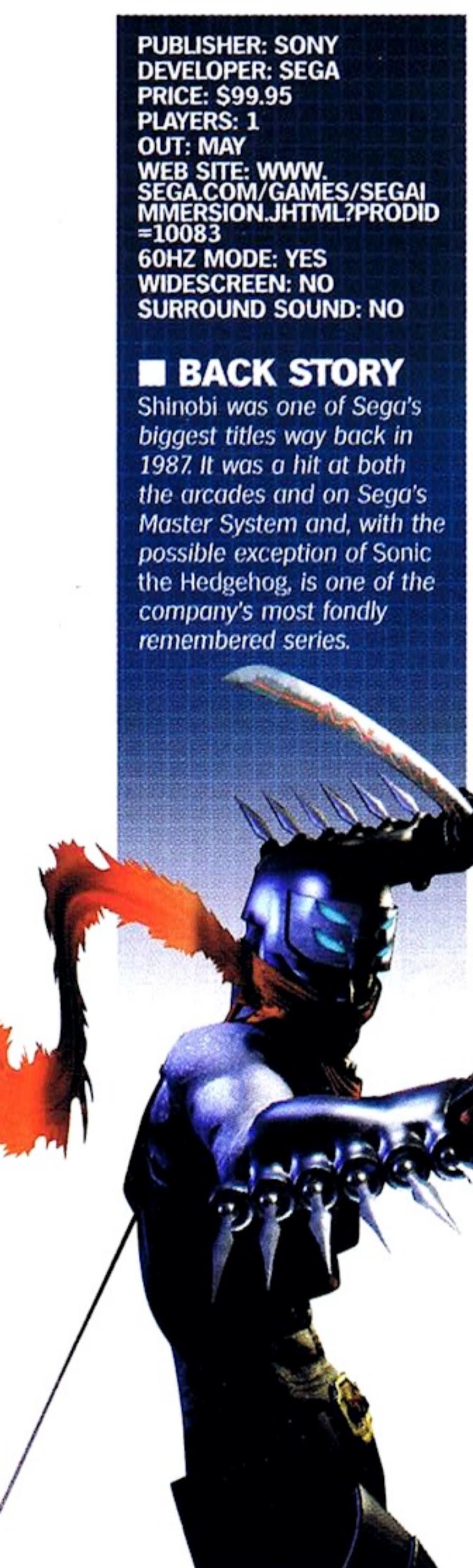
That's not to suggest that the 2003 *Shinobi* is as shallow, in terms of gameplay, as the games that came before it. In fact one of *Shinobi*'s strengths is the sheer range of abilities Hotsuma is capable of. Naturally you wield an impressive sword that has the power to literally cleave your enemies in two, plus an array of throwing knives that shock their targets into temporary immobility. Add to this your ability to run along walls, flip in two different directions in mid-air and the ability to 'stealth dash' so fast you leave a translucent after-image of yourself – surely the game's most inventive aspect. This isn't just an graphical gimmick, as your enemies will believe this after-image is you and will continue

hacking at it while you casually stroll up behind them and eviscerate with impunity.

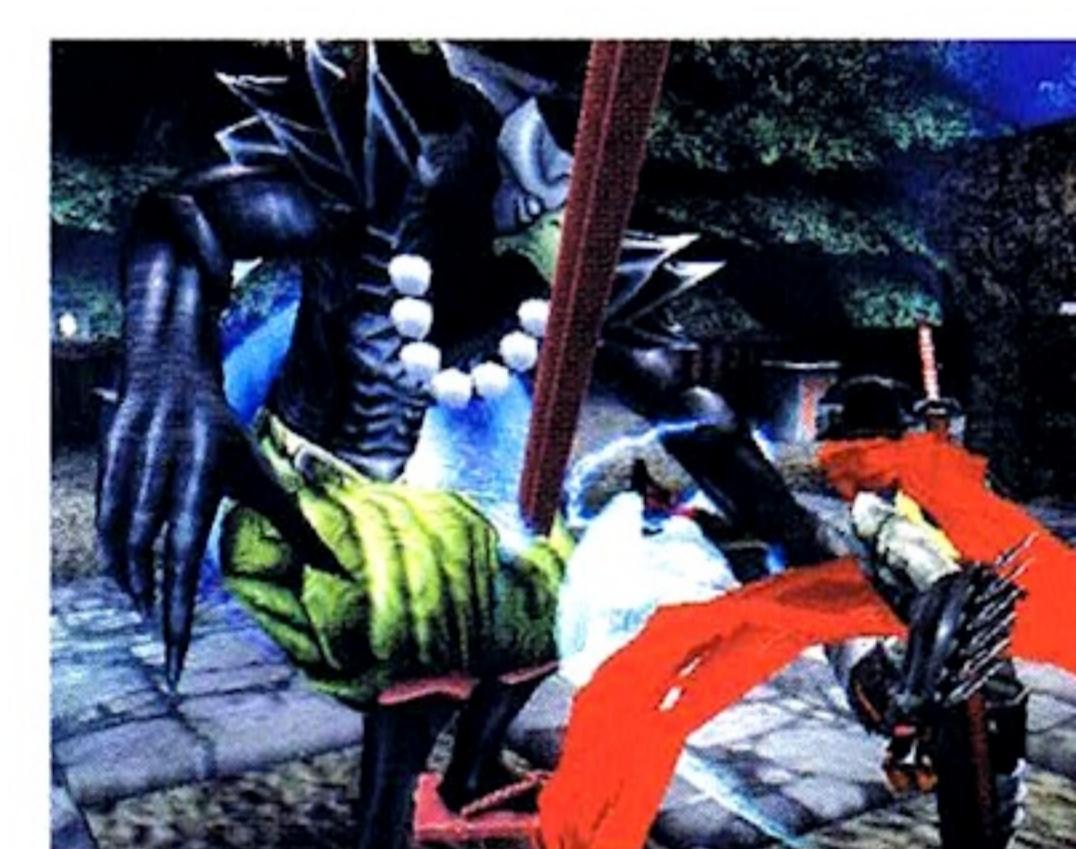
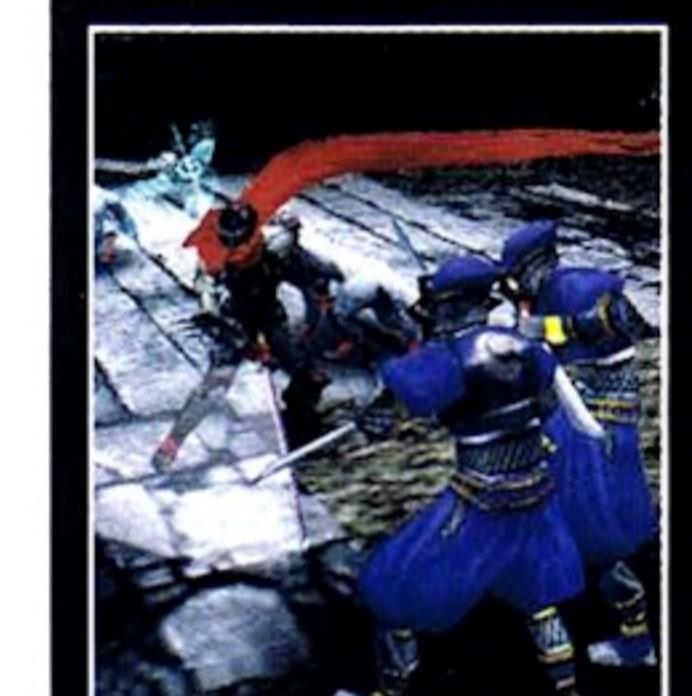
As well as these basic abilities, Hotsuma has Ninjutsu specials such as turning into a gigantic ball of flame or lightning. This will weaken tougher enemies long enough for you to pull off some spectacular finishing moves with your sword, Akujiki.

Your sword is a mixed blessing at best, because although it is an effective killing tool, it also has a 'terrible hunger' for the souls of your enemies. This is nothing new, games have been using the old 'weapon that sucks souls' schtick for years; the most notable example being *Soul Reaver 2*. But whereas that game gave you serious latitude in your soul collecting, *Shinobi*'s Akujiki is a demanding mistress. It requires kills and many of them at a steady rate. Slack off in the slashing department and your own life-force will become the blade's main meal. The best way to satiate the sword is to perform Tates. A Tate is when you kill more than one enemy in a short space of time. Once an enemy is killed it will freeze for a few moments. Any subsequent enemies killed within the following few seconds will also freeze. If you manage to freeze a whole bunch of enemies three things will happen. The first is you'll be treated to a very cool animation of Hotsuma delivering a pithy one-liner, sheathing his sword and watching as all his enemies fall to pieces. The second is that Akujiki will be fed a big meal of souls and won't bother you for a while. The third thing is Akujiki will be briefly supercharged and can deliver devastating damage to anything it hits.

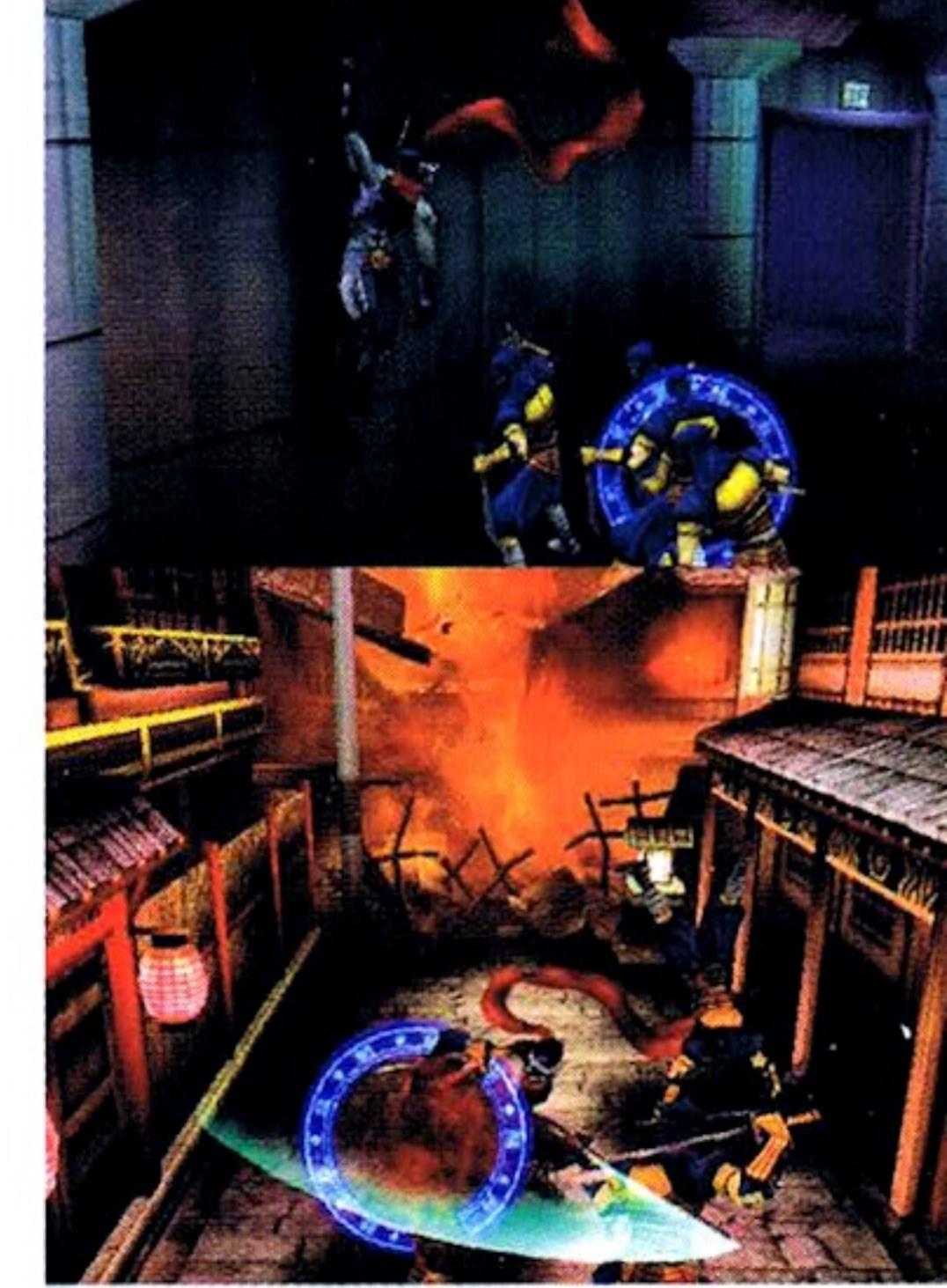
This latter effect is the most useful of all because



■ TATE THAT!
How to perform a Tate:
STEP 1: Attack a group of enemies.
STEP 2: Make sure you kill said enemies quickly.
STEP 3: Sheath your sword, say something cool and watch as your enemies fall into bloody chunks of dead flesh!



■ HANGING AROUND
Hotsuma works the wall.





■ IT'S RAINING MEN
And shuriken!



■ FAST AND FURIOUS
This is the only quiet scene in the whole game.



Shinobi is one tough game. Stylistically it looks a lot like Devil May Cry 2's younger, more hyperactive brother, although thankfully it has a chase camera rather than Capcom's trademark static screens. Unlike DMC2, the enemies in Shinobi are often fearsomely tricky. The bosses are almost impossible, causing many a controller to be hurled across the room. This isn't a bad thing per se, but players should be pre-warned, even on the Easy setting Shinobi is challenging. The fact that you start right back at the beginning of a level when you die doesn't help matters much, either. Expect frustration, expect sweaty palmed button mashing and expect to yell a lot.

Now onto Shinobi's less charming aspects, the most notable of which is the level design. While the characters are well animated and nicely textured, particularly Hotsuma's flowing red scarf, the levels are often drab and repetitive. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the game is so fast that the designers felt it was okay to put in less effort, but we haven't seen this many drab background textures since the early Hanna Barbera cartoons! The pace of the game is also a problem. It's hard and a little too fast. Akujiki's constant demand for souls makes it impossible to get into any real exploration – which would have been a nice counterpoint to the kinetic, but sometimes repetitive, ninja action.

Ultimately, though, Shinobi was never meant to be a

SHINOBI

Why we'd buy it:

- It's a masterful remake of a fondly remembered classic
- Fast, frantic and absorbing
- Simplistic, old school arcade gameplay we've been craving

Graphics

Nice models with slightly drab backgrounds

08

Sound

Solid sound effects with suitably tacky music

07

Gameplay

Fast, furious and very frustrating, but in a good way

08

Life span

Hard to beat, but a little repetitive

07

Shinobi is the kind of frantic, shallow, old school arcade game we don't see enough of any more. A fast and bloody good time.

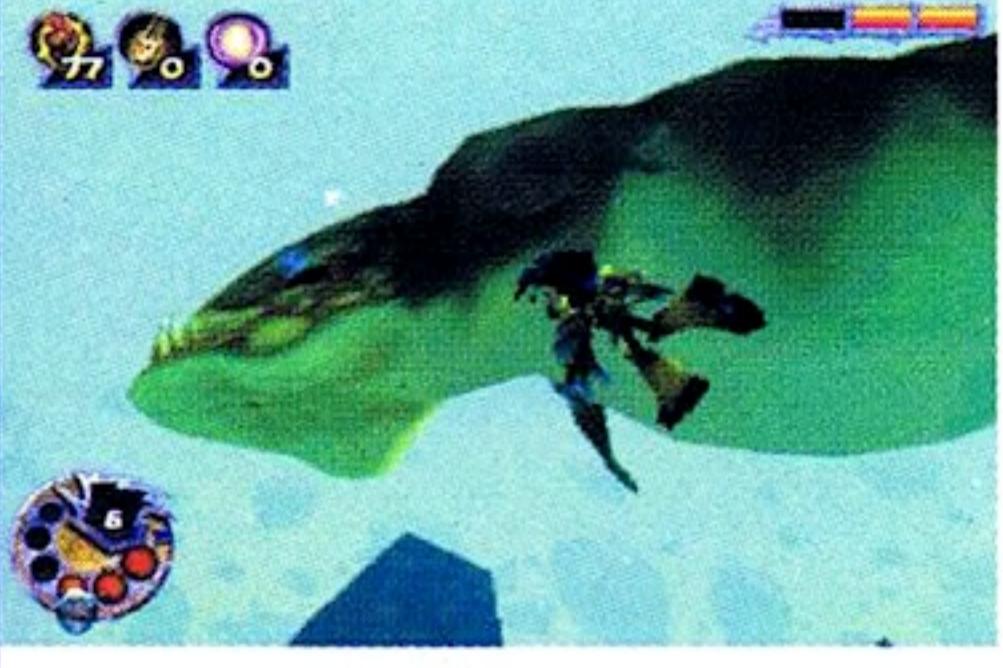
08

OFFICIAL VERDICT

NOW YOU SEE HIM

The Stealth Dash is a cool move; almost the opposite of 'Bullet Time'. Instead of slowing down you speed up so fast that your enemies think your after-image is you!





■ BACK STORY
Vexx is Acclaim's first homegrown platform game and comes from its US department in Austin, Texas. It was developed alongside *Turok: Evolution* – both games shared development resources, core technology and personnel.

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM STUDIOS AUSTIN
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.ACCLAIM.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



VEXX

Another day, another platformer. But make room, it's got claws...



Any hopes or fears that the traditional platform game genre is on its last legs are unfounded. *Vexx* is the most recent in a long line of Western-developed hopefuls to challenge the greats of the genre. The introduction to the game tells the story of young Vexx, a creature intent on avenging his grandfather's murder at the hands of the evil invader Dark Yabu and his shadowraiths.

It's obvious that, as with *Sly Raccoon's* stealth or *Ape Escape's* monkey hunting, any new venture into this genre now demands a hook to make it stand out from the crowd. *Vexx's* special feature is a huge pair of claws which attach themselves permanently to his previously mundane digits. These claws give *Vexx* some striking offensive moves and provide a legitimate excuse for the platforming staples of wall climbing and ceiling traversing. With good timing it's possible to juggle enemies using the claws, which in turn charges *Vexx's* power gauge and allows him to unleash more powerful combo attacks. This system works well – it even elevates the combat sections to the par of a beat-'em-up at times. But, unfortunately, enemy design is mainly uninspired, and the same – or very similar – enemies appear in all the different worlds, be they desert, forest or ice-themed. It soon becomes apparent that the innovative combat is very much secondary to more traditional platform fare.

Fortunately, there is a solid platform game beneath all this. There are ten worlds to explore, and within each world there are up to ten shadowraith hearts to be found or won. Refreshingly, these hearts can be collected in a fairly open order. The structure is familiar to any *Mario* fan: unlock a certain number of shadowraiths and you can open the next world from a central room. Collect 60 shadowraiths and you'll gain access to the final boss, Dark Yabu – and the extra twenty-odd wraiths will keep any completist nice and busy.



■ POOR SHOW The moves list is showy but pretty limited.



■ LEDGE FRENZY So many platforms, so little time.

■ VEXX APPEAL His gold suit would make Ali G jealous.

The meat of the game is made up of a myriad of platforming elements and tricks that have been seen countless times before. There are as many types of platform as you care to mention (spinning, invisible, see-saw, moving) and, impressively, pretty much everything you can see in the level is reachable, making for some enjoyable head-scratching moments.

It seems Acclaim has thrown everything but the kitchen sink at *Vexx* in terms of ideas: there's a light and dark theme, upgradable armour, a combo-based fighting engine, non-linear levels and puzzle elements. But all these genre pieces come together to become only slightly more than the sum of their parts and, in most cases, slightly less than the sum of their inspiration.

We have already seen most of *Vexx's* ideas better executed in other recently released platformers and while this is a good game, it's never great. If you're a platform lover there's much here to attract you, but if you're looking for innovation and genre progression, you'd do best to look elsewhere. □ Simon Parkin

VEXX

Why we'd buy it:

- A competent pastiche of platform-game elements
- We've completed the other recent big hitters

Why we'd leave it:

- Clipping and slowdown issues make it look visually dated
- We've played it all before

Graphics Sometimes stunning but often below par

06

Sound A decent atmospheric score

07

Gameplay Solid, but sadly a little stale

06

Life span It's tough, but the competent will finish it in 24 hours

07

Vexx is quality platform fare but its shortcomings can be summarised in four words: *Ratchet, Clank, Jak and Daxter*.

06

OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ DAREDEVIL Armour powerups make *Vexx* butch.

TOP SECRET

VEXX CHANGE

Acclaim has added variety to the action by including a couple of enjoyable mini-games. The successful completion of each one grants you a wraith heart. With two difficulty levels, these should keep you entertained for quite some time.



Drop is an excellent game in which *Vexx* runs around an arena attempting to touch more platform squares than his three rivals. Once a square has been touched, the platform falls away.



After each round the character with the least number of platform points is knocked out, leaving *Vexx* (hopefully) and one last opponent to fight it out in the final round.



Toss is a much simpler game in which *Vexx* races three of his resident demons to grab as many coins as he can within the time limit. One person is knocked out after each round.

The 2003 Annual

mixed by Mark Dynamix and UltraSun



THE 2003 ANNUAL

Mixed by

Mark Dynamix

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Ferry Corsten	4 Strings	Kylie Minogue	The Streets

Also available... **THE ANNUAL 2003 DVD** - Out 25 NOV



JUDGE DREDD Where would basketball be without chunky hair?



NBA STREET VOLUME 2

The street shooter is back with more air than a flight sim.

PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: EA SPORTS BIG
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: MAY
WEBSITE: WWW.EA.COM/EASPORTSBIG/GAMES/NBASTREET2/HOME.JSP
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: YES

BACK STORY
 EA Sports Big burst onto the scene way back when the PS2 was born, with the smash-hit SSX. This year EA Sports Big has got a few titles to look out for, including Def Jam Vendetta, SSX 3 and, of course, NBA Street Volume 2.



When EA Sports Big slammed NBA Street on the scene in 2001, the style of Midway's NBA Jam was improved with stunning graphics, innovative gameplay and over-the-top moves that made the Harlem Globetrotters look like a bunch of amateurs. Now EA Sports Big intends to hold court with NBA Street Volume 2 and by the looks of it, no one's got a chance of stealing the ball from them.

Volume 2 sticks with the same formula as the original; three-on-three full court, first to score 21 points wins. However, this time around you get to lay down the court rules. Don't want a shot clock? Ditch it. Hate playing to 21? Then don't. In fact, you can even arrange it so you can only get points by slamming it home. Although when we say slamming, we're not referring to the dunks you see in the NBA. No, Volume 2 has a range of unique and acrobatic ways to put the ball through the hoop. For example, you can bounce it off your opponent's head, dribble it with your knees, throw it off the backboard, jump 20 feet in the air, put the ball through your legs, then into the basket while hanging on

the ring and waving to the crowd.

But what really separated NBA Street from the pack was its 'Gamebreaker' feature. A Gamebreaker works the same way as Tony Hawk's point system; once you've built up your meter by pulling off various combos, you can unleash a special move that adds points to your score and takes points away from your opponents. The Gamebreakers in Volume 2 include a regular one where you still have a 50 per cent chance of missing it and a Level Two Gamebreaker that's unblockable, unstealable and unstoppable (see Pull Your Own Gamebreaker).

So, who's doing the dribbling? Volume 2 features the starting line up from all 29 NBA teams, including favourites Vince Carter, Kobe Bryant and Tracy McGrady, as well as a select group of "old school" superstars such as Clyde "The Glide" Drexler, Dominique "The Human Highlight Reel" Wilkins and Julius "Dr J" Erving. But if these guys don't get your balls bouncing then you can always create your own with Volume 2's Create A Legend mode. The Create mode is very in-depth and allows you to choose the player's stats, height, weight and even



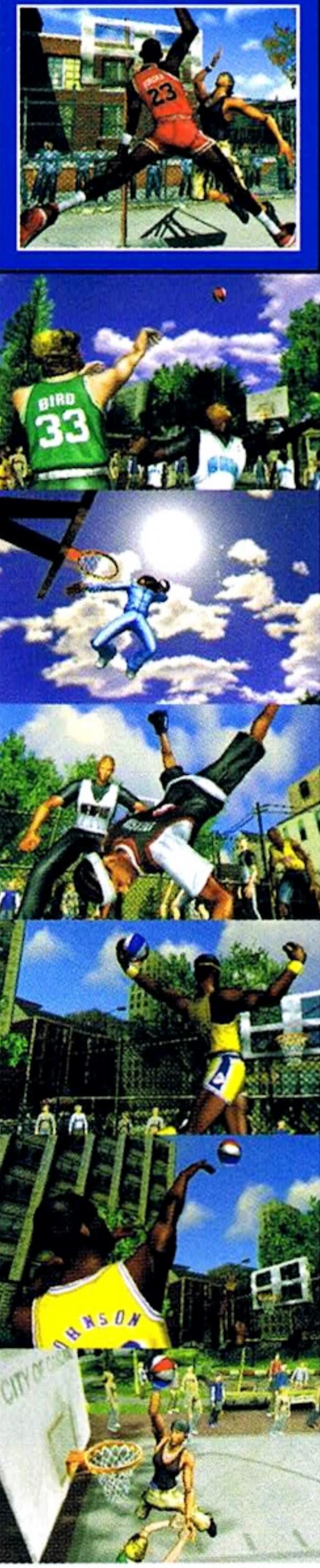
THREE FACES OF JORDAN

In NBA Street Volume 2 there's not one, not two, but three Michael Jordan's, all with their own characteristics.

Jordan 1: This is the MJ who burst onto the NBA scene in '84 and dominated the league with his high-flying ability. He's okay at shooting, good on defence, and always sticks out his tongue when going for a jam.

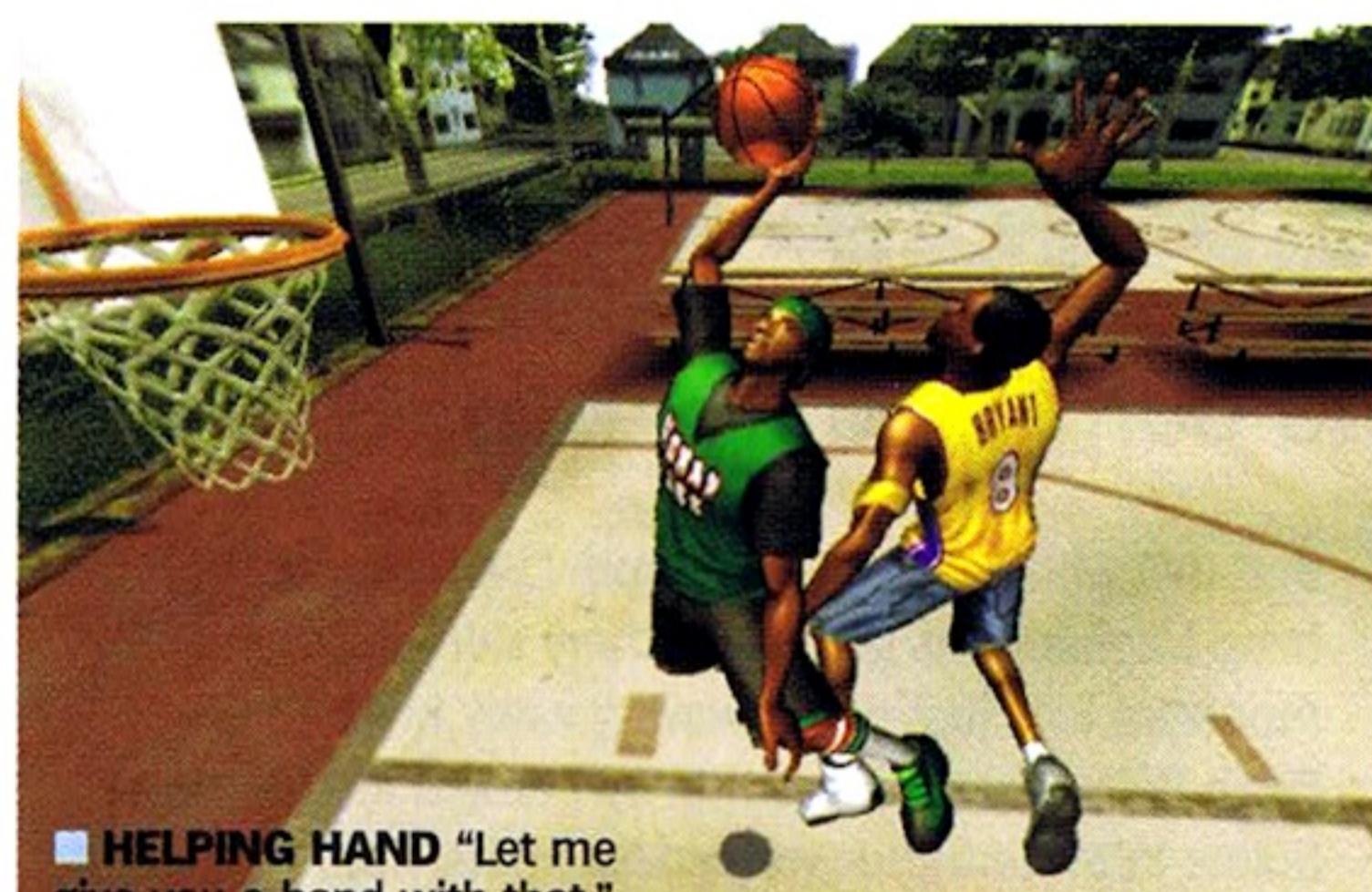
Jordan 2: This is the MJ who returned after failing miserably at baseball and then won another three championships with the Bulls. This MJ is brilliant at shooting and defence, and also sticks out his tongue when going for a jam.

Jordan 3: This is the MJ we see on the court today. He moves a little slower, can't jump as high but still throws like a sharpshooter. Oh, and he always sticks out his tongue when going for a jam.

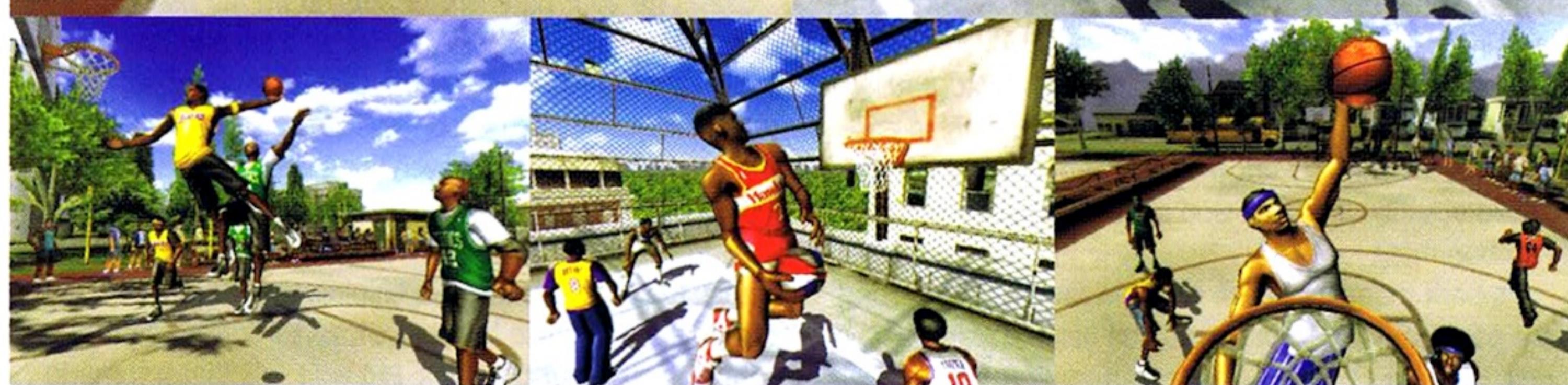




CHILD'S PLAY
They'll let anyone play in this game.



HELPING HAND "Let me give you a hand with that."



their outfits by using the points earned from the NBA Challenge mode. If you think your team's missing an eight foot tall, 500 pound monster who can dunk from the free-throw line while wearing more bling bling than Selwyn, then you can build him.

Although if you plan to create a baller like that, you're going to need a lot of points, and the only way you'll earn them is by competing in the NBA Challenge mode. The Challenge is no different from the original version; you still pick an NBA team and compete against other NBA teams in their respective regions. Defeating teams allows you to unlock stats, outfits, courts and NBA legends. The Challenge mode won't be as challenging as you might like if you leave Volume 2 on its default difficulty setting. While it's fun winning 21-nil the first few times, you'll be begging for the opposition to bring their game sooner rather than later. The Medium and Hard difficulty settings don't differ greatly, but if you jump straight from Easy to Hard you'll be the one losing 21-nil, that is if you haven't already thrown the controller at the TV and reset the console in a fit of frustration.

Even with a solid single player mode, Volume 2 is at its best when you've got mates around. The high-flying over-the-top action will appeal not only to hoop fans but also to people who've never picked up a basketball in their life. The simple control setup allows anyone to pick up a controller and dominate the court, even if they don't know the rules. Pulling off a five-star jam is as easy as pressing any two shoulder buttons and Circle.

Pressing any two shoulder buttons and Square will make

your player do a break dance move with the basketball.

The only complaint we have with Volume 2 is in the visual department. Even though the Saturday morning cartoon visuals fit the arcade action like a glove, some of the more popular ballers like Shaq and Larry Bird don't look anything like their real life counterparts, and with Volume 2's fast-paced style, sometimes it's hard to distinguish who's who on the court.

Despite this minor flaw, NBA Street Volume 2 is still king of the basketball ring. Improving a game that had already nailed it the first time round is no easy task, but EA Sports Big has outdone itself – enhancing on everything that made NBA Street a must-own. But while Volume 2 falls shy of a perfection, it has more than enough bounce for your buck. □ Paul Frew

NBA STREET VOLUME 2

Why we'd buy it:

- Awesome non-stop action
- Great single player and multiplayer modes
- SSX 3 special preview.

Why we'd leave it:

- Some poor character models
- Too unrealistic
- Only 10 courts to play on

Graphics

Cartoon graphics suit, but character models aren't great

08

Sound

Funky tunes help you with your rim jobs

09

Gameplay

Simple controls allow everyone to fly like Mike

09

Life span

Solid single player, loads of options for multiplayer

09

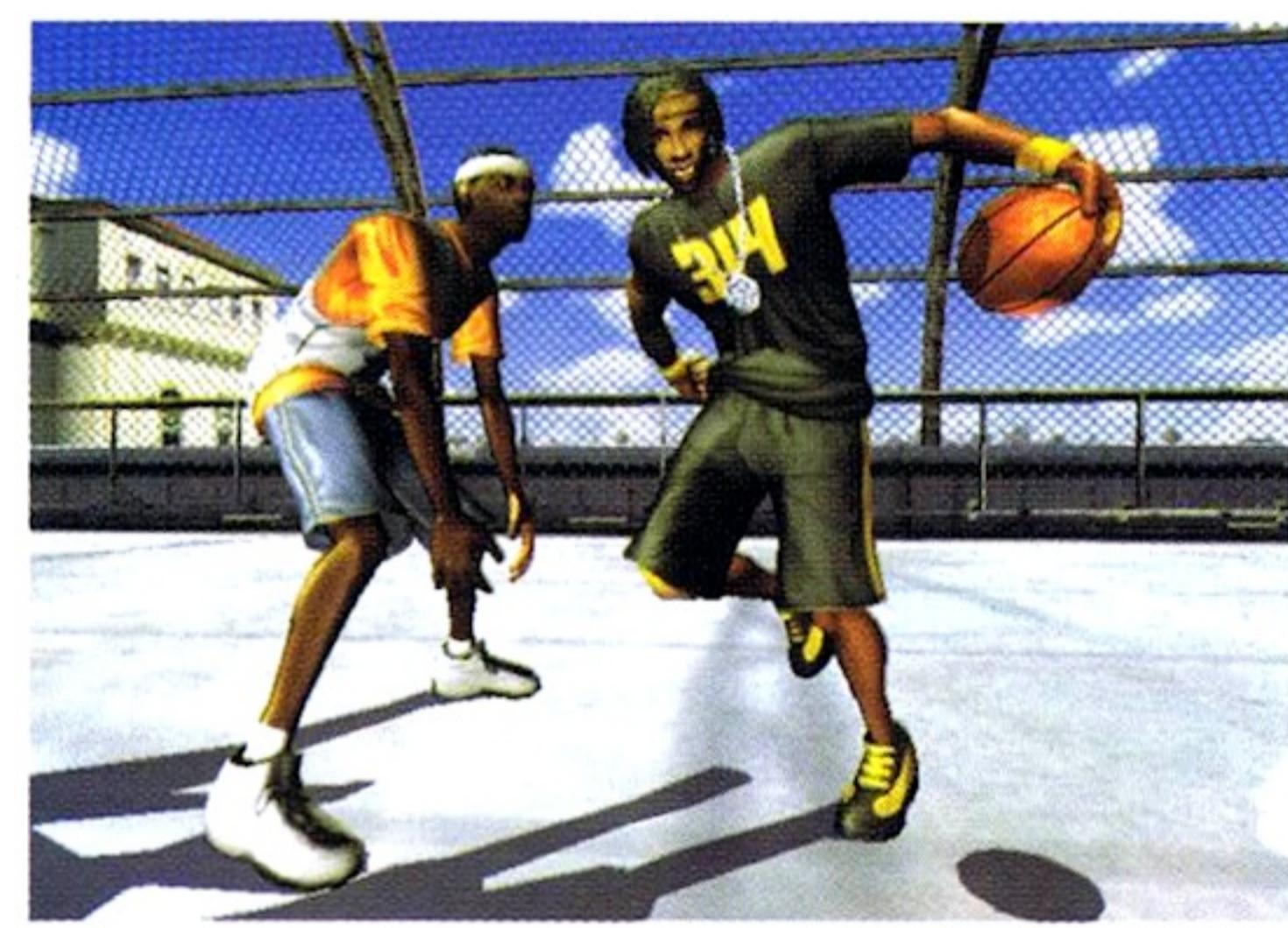
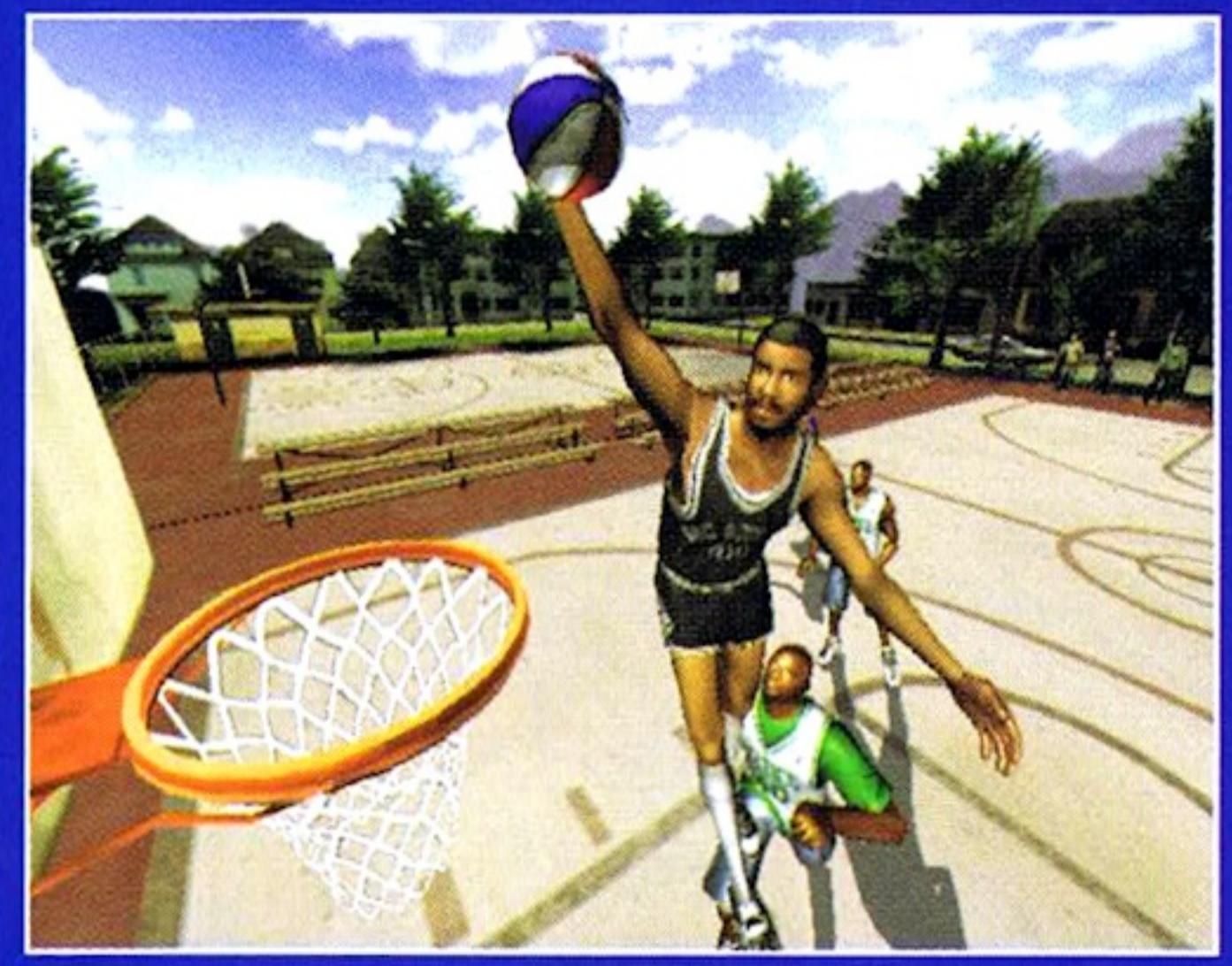
A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.

09

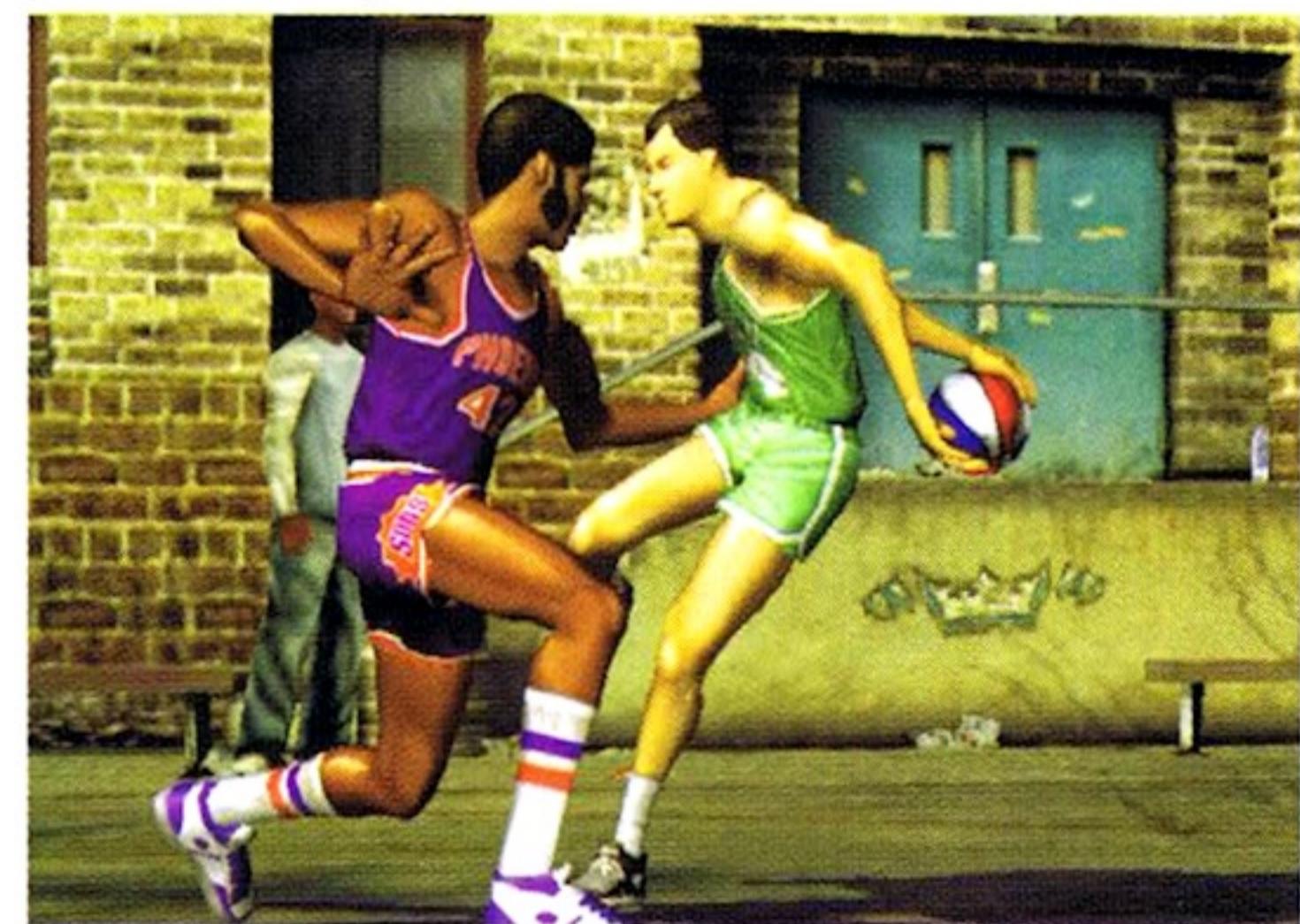
OFFICIAL VERDICT

PULL YOUR OWN GAMEBREAKER

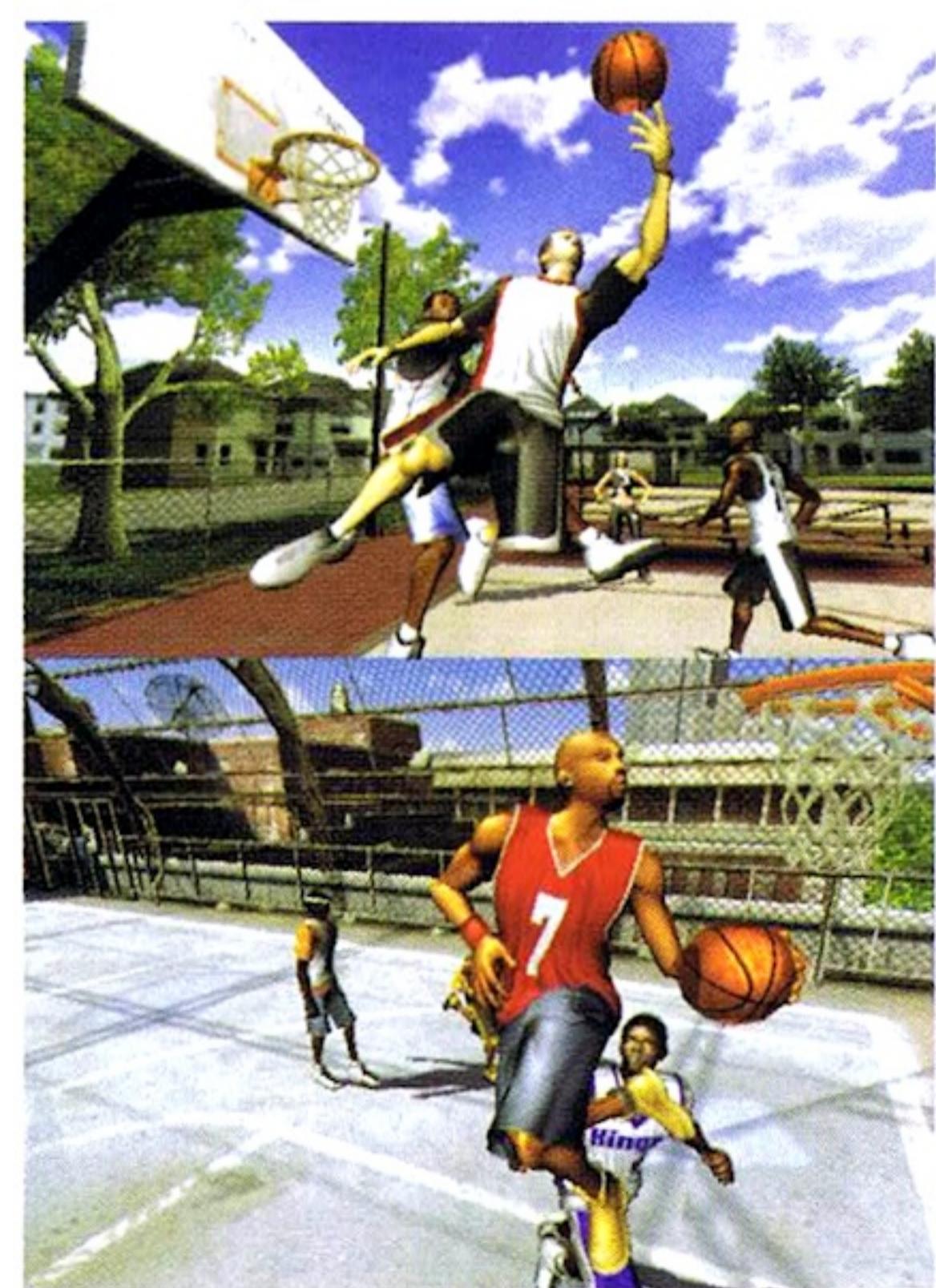
- 1) Build up your Gamebreaker meter by throwing ally oops, dribbling with your knees and pulling off any combo that's possible.
- 2) When the screen turns blue and the ball is in your hand, hit the SELECT button to pocket the Gamebreaker.
- 3) Repeat the first step until the screen turns gold. Hold two shoulder buttons, press Circle, then sit back and watch the opposition be humiliated.



BALL CONTROL With a little practise you'll be dribbling with the best of them.



FOUL PLAY Why is the ref never there when you need him?





JURASSIC PARK: PROJECT GENESIS

Keep your windows wound up and don't feed the wildlife...

■ BACK STORY

Considering the theme park premise of Spielberg's human buffet epics, it's amazing nobody thought to make a Jurassic Park flavoured version of Theme Park World before. Hats off to local developer Blue Tongue. This certainly makes a change from its first big title, AFL: Finals Fever, an Aussie Rules Football game.

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
DEVELOPER: BLUE TONGUE
SOFTWARE
PRICE: \$79.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE:
WWW.JPTHEGAME.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

PARK LIFE Now where did we put the Doyouthinkhesaurus?



X To us, it's just a typical tale of another bunch of dinosaurs on a rampage, but back in 1993, Spielberg's sharp-taloned blockbuster carried a moral message: when man plays God, nature gets prehistoric on his ass. So why it's taken so long for some bright spark to make *Jurassic Park* into a God sim is anyone's guess.

A full decade on from the original franchise, *Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis* is finally ready to hatch. In an egg-shell, it's *Theme Park* with big teeth – but given the relative scarcity of quality God sims on PlayStation 2, this is no bad thing.

As park manager, you're responsible for constructing your park from the terraformed soil up. The learning curve is steep: OPS2's ill-advised attempt at a free-range park saw customers fleeing from roaming lizards before they got a chance to splash their cash on the burger hut. But the Exercises mode introduces you to a team of experts who will teach you the surprisingly versatile control method and guide you through the creation of a fully-functioning monster paradise.

The most important element of any modern business is the customer. As usual, however, they're a fickle bunch. Some tender souls will be happiest watching mummy and daddy Stegosaurus grazing by a lake from a leisurely safari ride. Others – the thrill-seekers – will only have their dino-lust sated by the sight of shrieking reptilians tearing cows into bloody gobbets from the dubious safety of a viewing dome. It's your job to please everyone, all the time – and then flog them the over-priced souvenirs before they hop on the chopper home.

So far, so familiar: a bunch of beautifully-animated dinosaurs is a good start, but it can't disguise the fact

that this whole genre is well trod. Luckily, innovation runs deep beneath this game's leathery skin. Building scarier monsters isn't just about waving wads of cash. Oh no. Fresh DNA can be unearthed by intrepid archeological teams in around-the-world fossil hunts, then refined into beasts for your hatchery, or flogged on the black market. Meanwhile, you've got a crew of eggheads in the research lab working on everything from disease vaccines to hot air balloon rides, extending the game's life span and providing everything you'll need to build your park into a prehistoric Eden.

In keeping with the film, we will leave on a cautionary note. Right now, the sun is shining, the punters are grinning, and those beasts look awful docile behind those high security fences. But wait – is that a tornado we can see brewing on the horizon? We are going to be okay, aren't we? Aren't we? □ Louis Pattison

JURASSIC PARK: PROJECT GENESIS

Why we'd buy it:

- Dinosaurs, dude
- Good PS2 God sims are so rare, they're virtually extinct

Why we'd leave it:

- The first couple of hours are a headache
- We've already played *Theme Park* to death

Graphics Good animation, lush scenery

Sound Grm. Grr. Grrrrrr

Gameplay Complex menu system, but well-executed

Life span Patient? Then this could last you an ice age

07

A prehistoric premise, sure. But *Operation Genesis* puts a fresh spin on the God sim genre. Hammond would be proud.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

DINO RAMPAGE

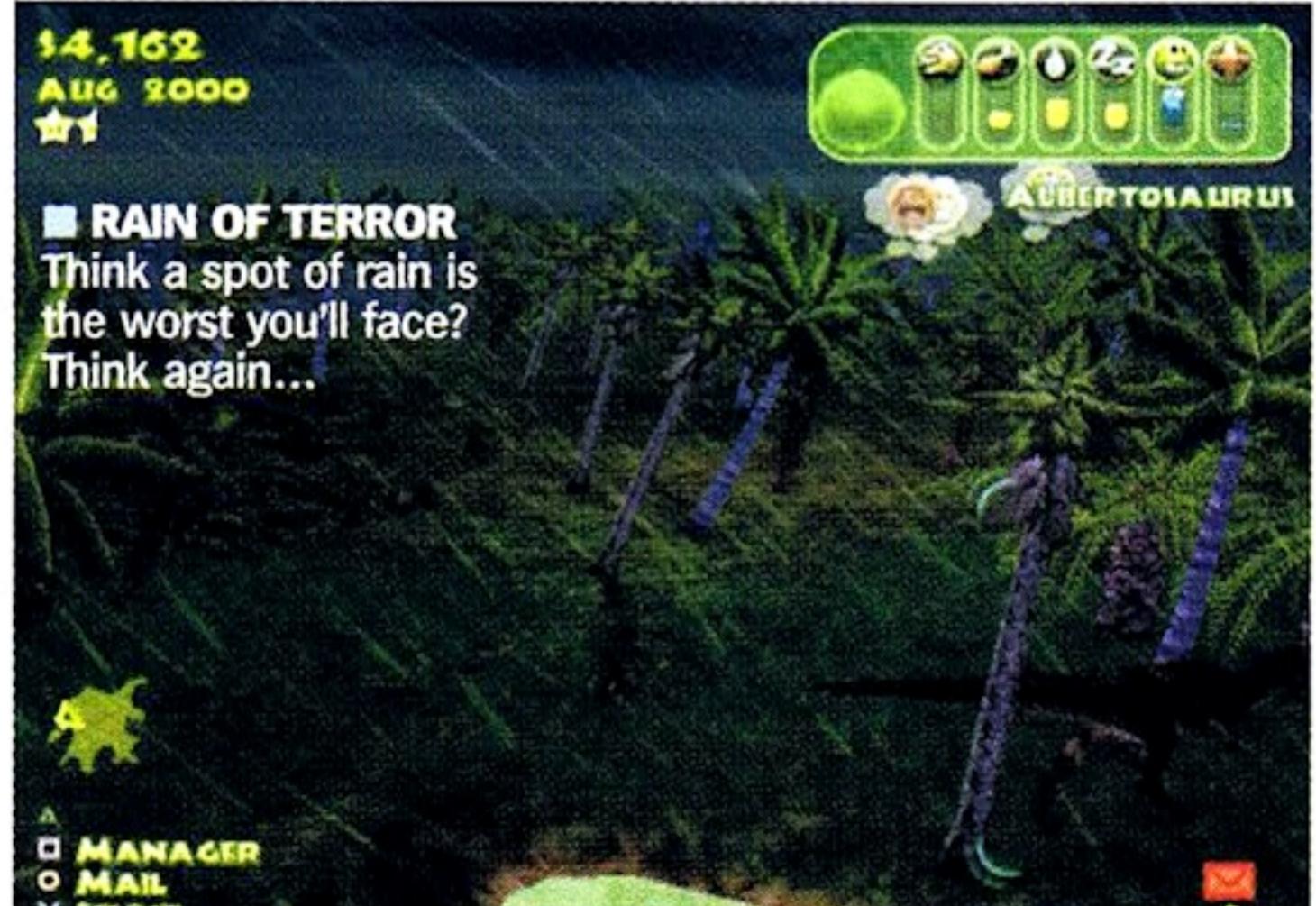
With crazy carnivores on the loose there's no way you'll be able to protect the paying public without employing some dino expert help. Who you gonna call? Park Ranger!



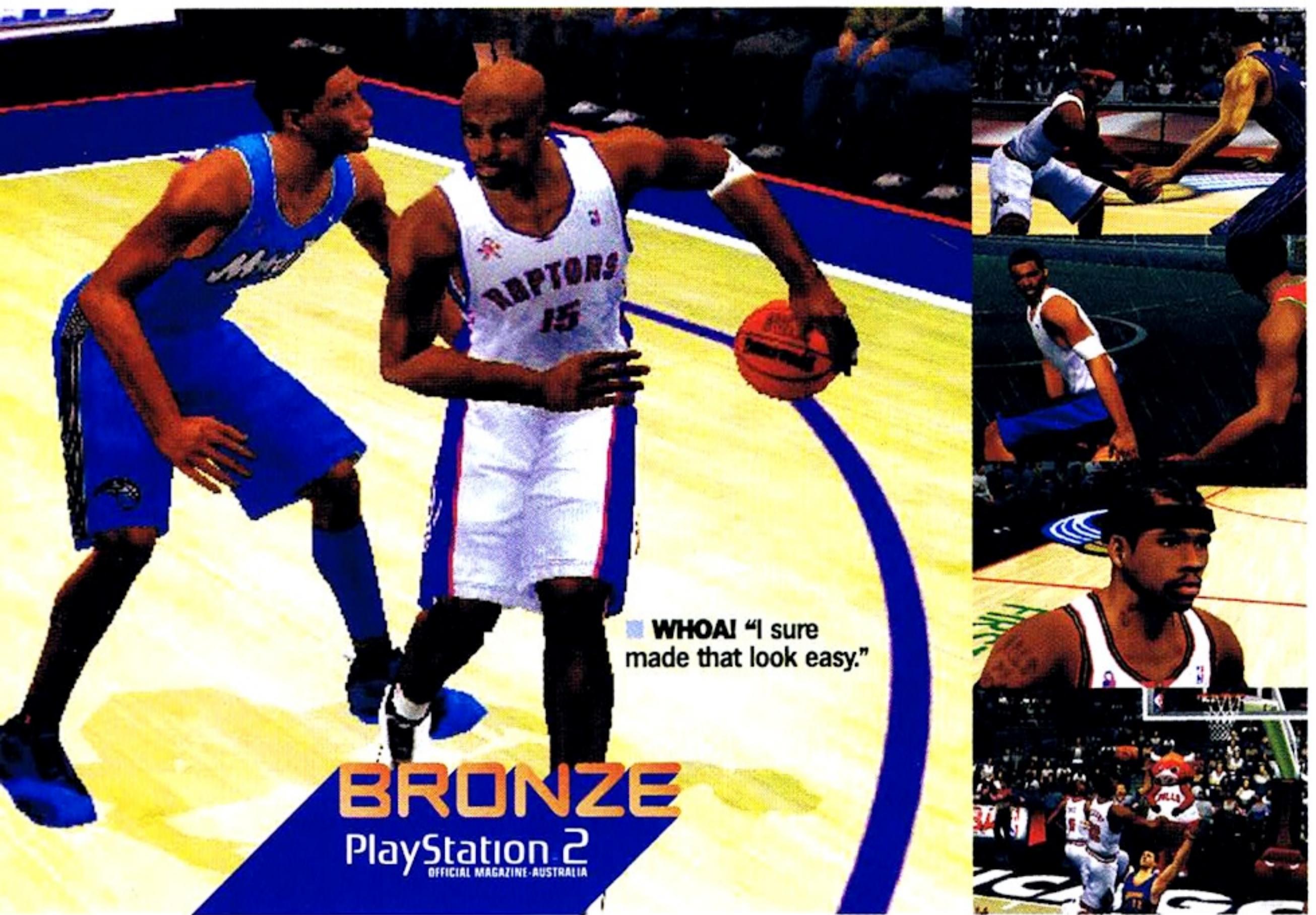
Oh no! A beast has slipped through a damaged part of the security fence. It's your job to stop it before the customers become the hunted...



From the safety of a helicopter, your eagle-eyed ranger tranquillizes the escapee. A warning, though: the chopper can't fly in a storm.

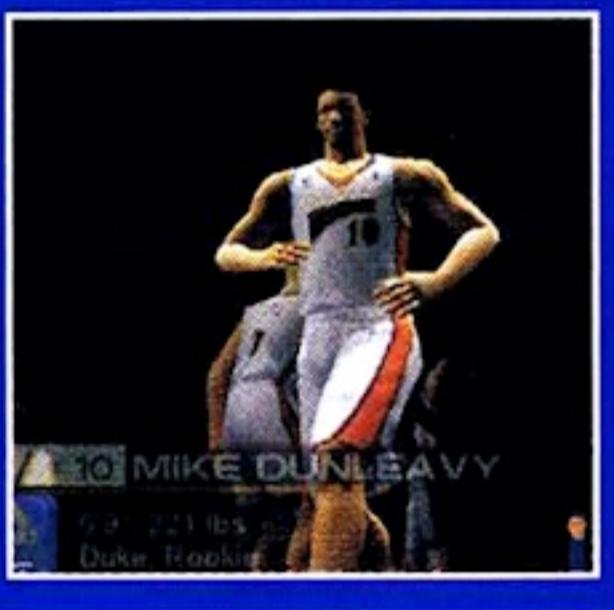


■ RAIN OF TERROR
Think a spot of rain is the worst you'll face? Think again...



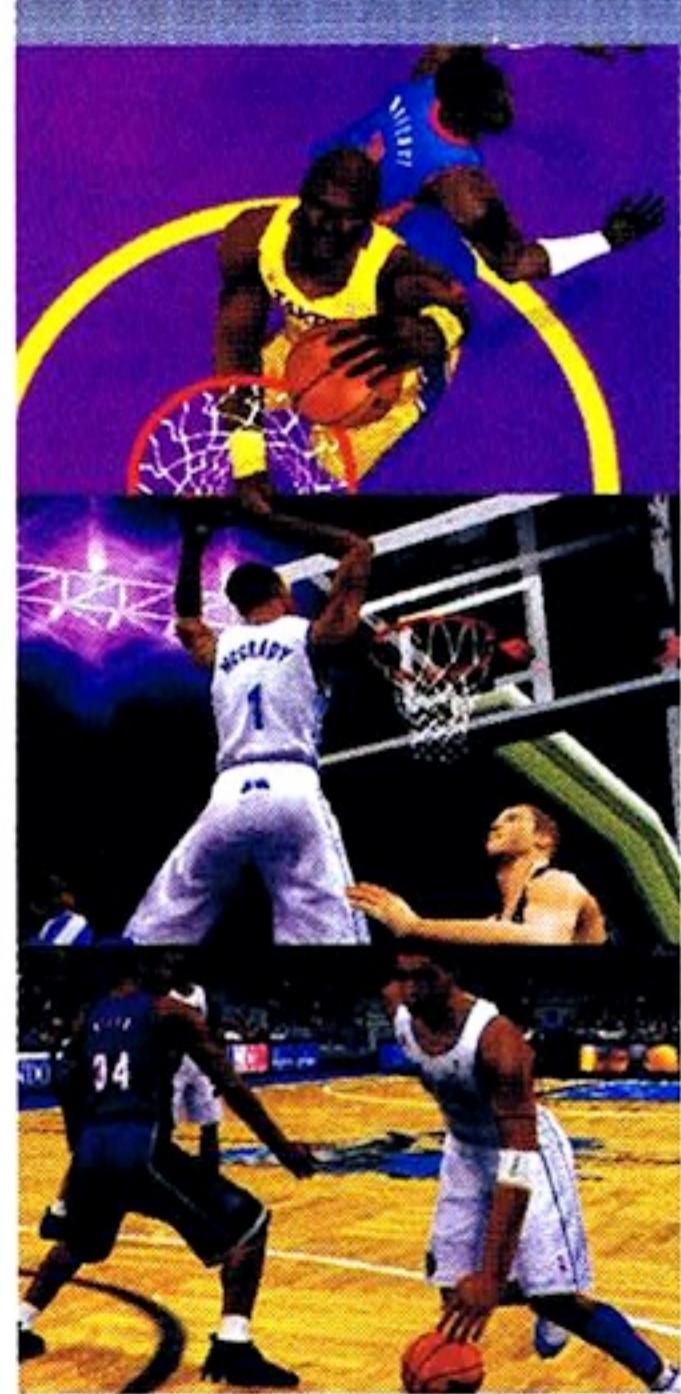
PLUG IN

Make no mistake, NBA 2K3 is ready for online play. After Sony releases its modem, it will simply be a case of setting up your internet account and logging on through your ISP to start up some Exhibition matches or download updated rosters. OPS2 will keep you informed with the online play when it all gets going down here.



PUBLISHER: INFOGRAPHICS
DEVELOPER: SEGA
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.SEGA.COM/SEGASPORTS
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: MULTI TAP, MODEM

■ BACK STORY
The 2K series came as was welcome news to Dreamcast owners after monster publisher EA decided not to bring any of its killer sporting apps to the now departed system. As it happened Sega's series kicked off in fine form with the highly rated NFL 2K, following it up with NBA 2K, NHL 2K and the WSB 2K games – all of which will soon be available on PS2.



NBA 2K3

Great balls of Americana, another basketball game Down Under.



Unlike our local sports, which don't get much attention when it comes to videogames, US sports games are big business. As you'd expect there's been more than a few made – too many, in fact. But Sega's latest hoops offering *NBA 2K3*, is a star performer packed with enough features and class to elevate it above the dingy swamp of alternatives.

While *NBA 2K3* initially seems firmly aimed towards a simulation style of play, it provides a wealth of gameplay options to delight basketball tinkerers. If you feel blocks are happening far too frequently just drop down the relevant option and they will become as rare as gum trees in Pakistan. Finding the game too slow? Give the players a shot of adrenaline from the options menu to fix it up pronto. While most elements of the game can be adjusted, don't expect to see any flaming somersault dunks.

That said, the options are just the start of the features on offer. There's a stadium load of game modes like Street, Play-off, Season and an exhaustive Franchise option – which allows players to create a team, draft upcoming talent, hire and fire coaches and manage budgets. Not only are all the NBA teams here complete with stats, but there's also the Dream Teams from earlier basketball eras. Another feature that's worth a mention is the audio database that searches your Create-A-Player's surnames against the game's existing database of NBA players. If there's a match the commentators will refer to your created player using the available sound file instead of calling him "the shooting forward".

All these features wouldn't mean squat if the game wasn't fun. The bugs and drawbacks present in the previous installment have been squashed. The main

game is lots of fun, and there's also a sack of spin, pivot and cross-over moves for the high-flying fans. The controls are tight and include staples like icon passing, as well as quick access to setting up isolation plays and the like, if you're technically inclined. There are a few things that even the endless options can't improve though. The often awkward rebounding and the way players seem to have to slow down before passing the ball are both annoyances but it's all quite manageable.

The presentation of the players and stadiums is also impressive, complete with animations that reek of on-court persona and realism. There aren't any glitches in sight and the crowd is perhaps the most impressive yet seen in a videogame. The only criticism would be the frequent frame-rate stutters, but this is only a minor blemish on an otherwise great looking game. *NBA 2K3* has something for every serious basketball fan. □ James Ellis

NBA 2K3

Why we'd buy it:

- Endless options let you control everything
- It's ready to be played online

Why we'd leave it:

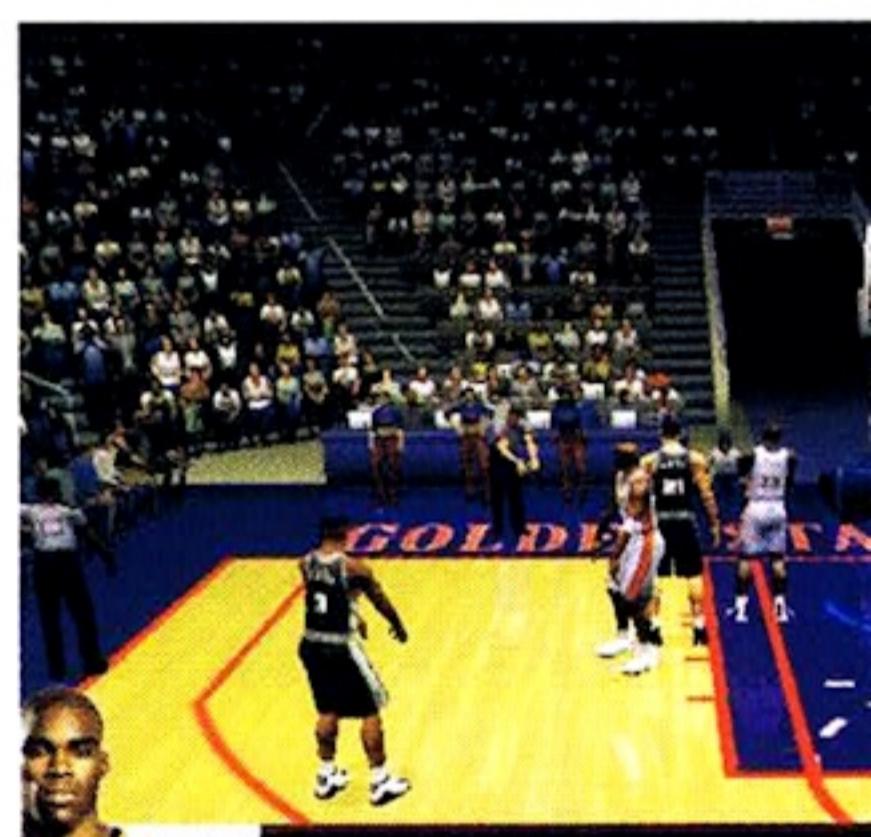
- Give us mega dunks in your face NOW
- It will be too complex for some

Graphics	Some good animations, but poor frame rate	09
Sound	Great commentary with a few annoying repetitions	05
Gameplay	Arcade, simulation or somewhere in between	07
Life span	There's enough options to last you into retirement	07

You'll need to tinker with the options to get the game feeling perfect, but *NBA 2K3* is the best basketball simulation yet.

08

OFFICIAL VERDICT

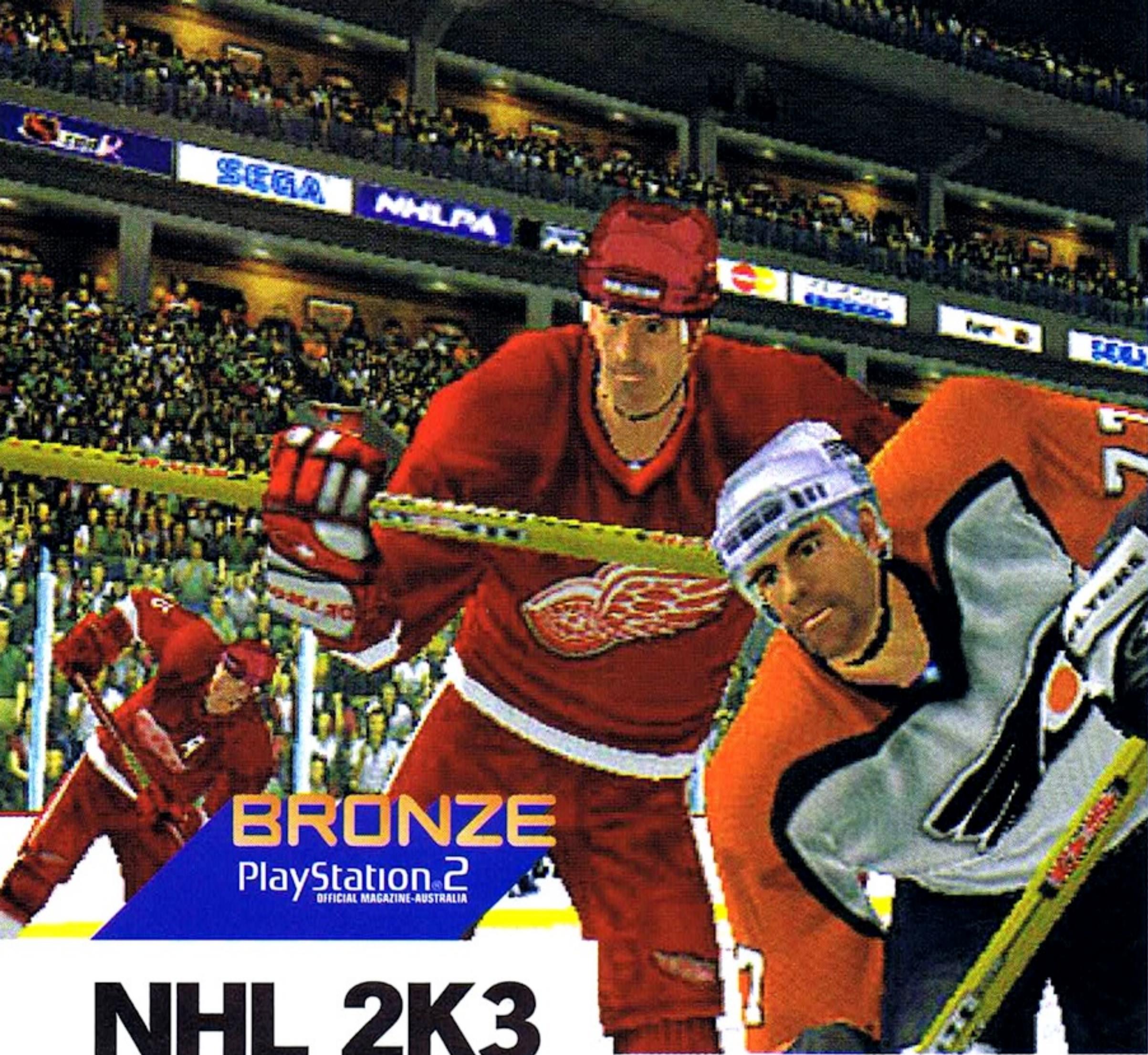


DIRTY SANCHEZ The most feared move of all.



BLOOPER Isn't that blue alien in the wrong game?

MAY | 2003 | PlayStation 2 | 069



NHL 2K3

OPS2 takes its skates off and tries to stab someone with them!

ICE TO SEE YOU Blocking shots isn't as easy as it looks.

BACK STORY NHL 2K2 was one of the last releases on Sega's ill-fated Dreamcast console. With its NHL 2K series Sega has managed to do what few, if any, other developers have managed; and that's offer a viable hockey alternative to EA Sports' own franchise. The sport itself originated in Canada and was initially called 'Ice Hurley'.

MORE MOVES THAN MARTIN BRODEUR One of the most impressive features of NHL 2K3 is the outstanding goalie physics engine. Goalies give off a real sense of momentum, so that if they dive to save a shot they'll have to push themselves up and re-centre for the next shot. This makes taking advantage of rebounding much more crucial when scoring.

I'VE GOT THE SPLITS NHL 2K3 can be frustrating.



It would be safe to assume that the majority of Aussie gamers who buy ice hockey games have only a casual interest in the sport, and are mostly after the flashy moves, high-speed hits and multiplayer thrills that the games provide. Let's face it, with almost zero media coverage in this country it's entirely possible that there are a lot of people who have spent more time playing videogame hockey than actually watching the real thing.

For this reason, NHL 2K3 will more than likely appeal to a niche market Down Under. While its arcade settings are almost on par with EA Sports' NHL series, its main drawcard is the depth of its simulation mode. Comparing NHL 2K3 with NHL 2003 is like comparing Pro Evolution Soccer with EA's FIFA series, the former in both instances offer realism and subtle controls, while the latter goes for flashy moves and top-notch presentation.

So how serious a sim is NHL 2K3? Well for starters, when you load up the game the difficulty defaults to the Pro setting – which is quite tough – but it's where it should be left in order to appreciate the razor sharp AI of both your team mates and your opponents. Sure, there are still times when you can take the puck one-on-one against the opposition's goalie and come away victorious, but more often than not you need to rely on employing the right strategies and passing the puck around for success.

Pinning players to the boards, checking effectively and dumping the puck off to your team mates can all be achieved with ease thanks to a well implemented control system that features a unique 'modifier' system. Using the shoulder buttons in conjunction with the normal pass and shoot buttons you can modify your moves. Instead of a wrist shot you can hit a scorching slap shot, and rather than making a normal pass you



can turn it into a well timed flip pass. This system takes practise to get used to but pays off in the end, although some players may be a bit intimidated by the sheer number of situation-specific moves to remember; offence with puck, offence without puck, defence, goalie without puck, and so on.

So far it sounds like a hockey fan's icy dream come true, right? Well it just about is, if not for a couple of problems. The commentary, while good, is not a patch on NHL 2003's colourful and spot-on announcing. The fast action is complemented by a very smooth frame rate, but the players' faces are devoid of detail and the game lacks the visual punch of EA's offering.

Even so, true hockey fans who look past these minor complaints will be rewarded with the most convincing simulation of the sport yet. Casual fans should give it a try too – after a couple of sessions you might just pack up your skates and move to Canada. □ Tristan Oglivie

NHL 2K3

Why we'd buy it:

- Brilliant control system allows you to control your entire team
- Intelligent and unforgiving AI
- We're so hard-core we paint team logos on our faces

Why we'd leave it:

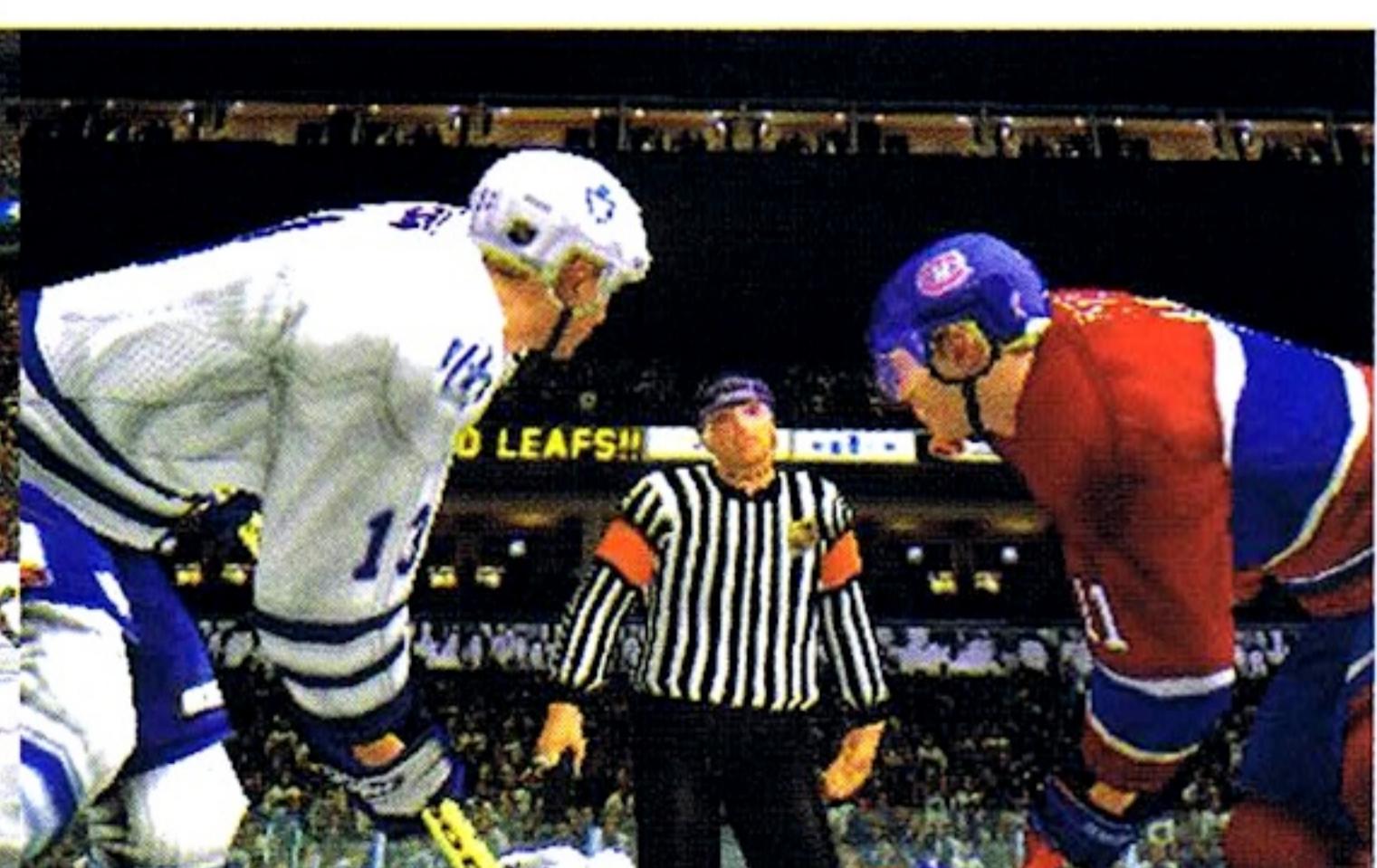
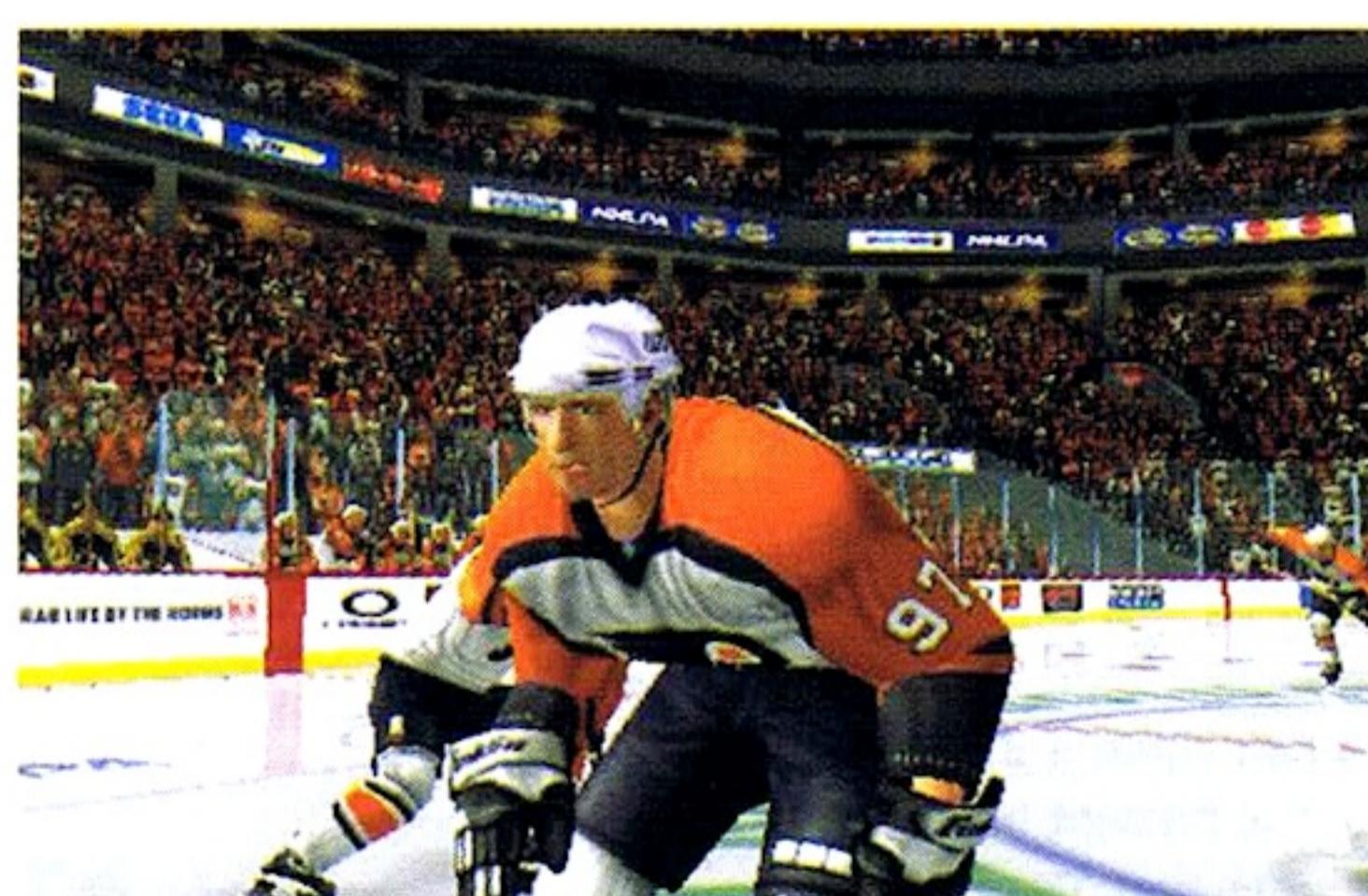
- We're satisfied with the arcade thrills provided in NHL 2003 and NHL Hitz
- The fights are still a case of button mashing

Graphics Solid but not outstanding **07**
Sound Slightly repetitive commentary, generic crowd noise **07**
Gameplay The most realistic console hockey experience ever **09**
Life span Quality Franchise mode and great multiplayer fun **08**

Excellent simulation settings for the die-hard fans, and plenty of arcade thrills for the rest of us.

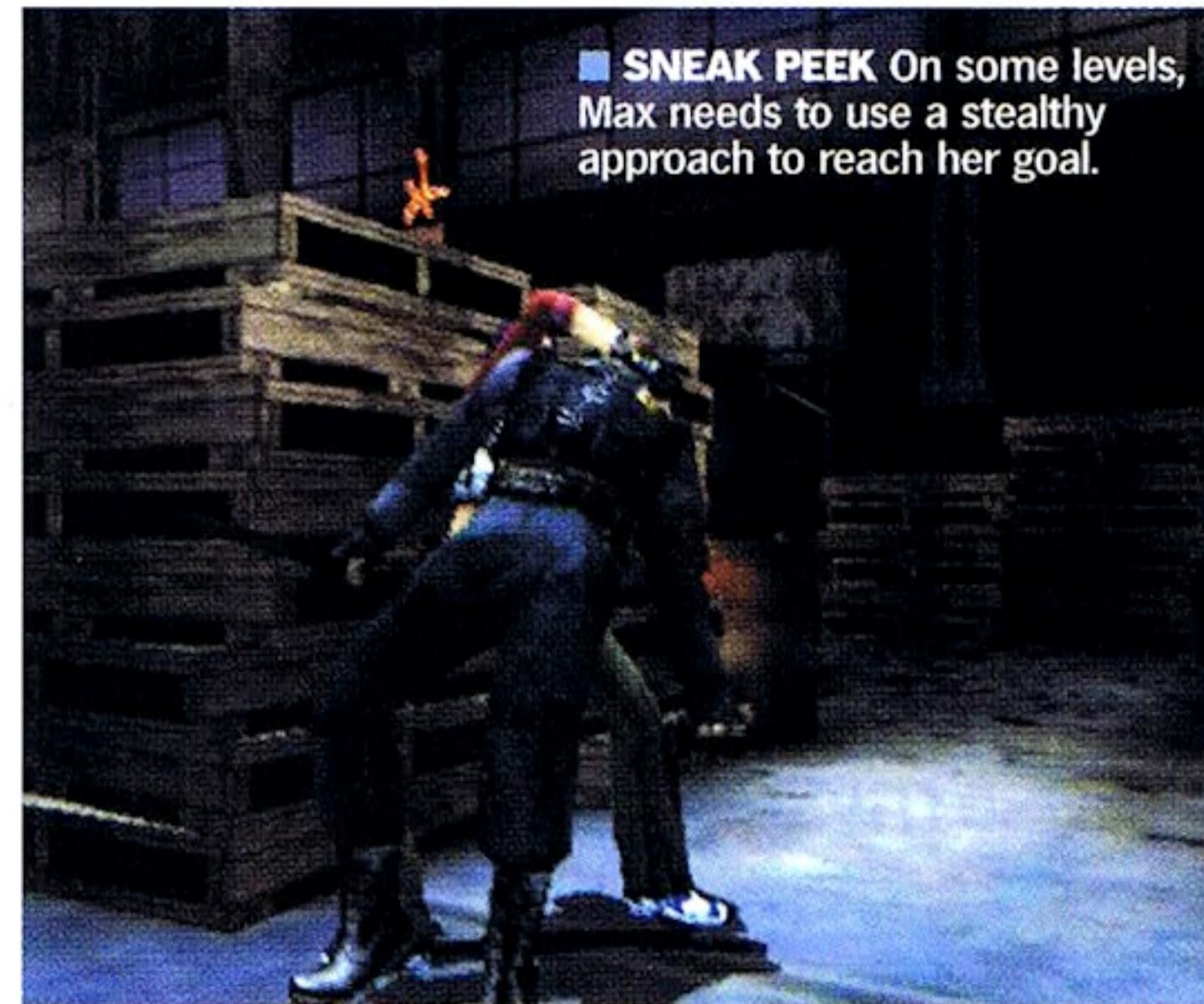
08

OFFICIAL VERDICT

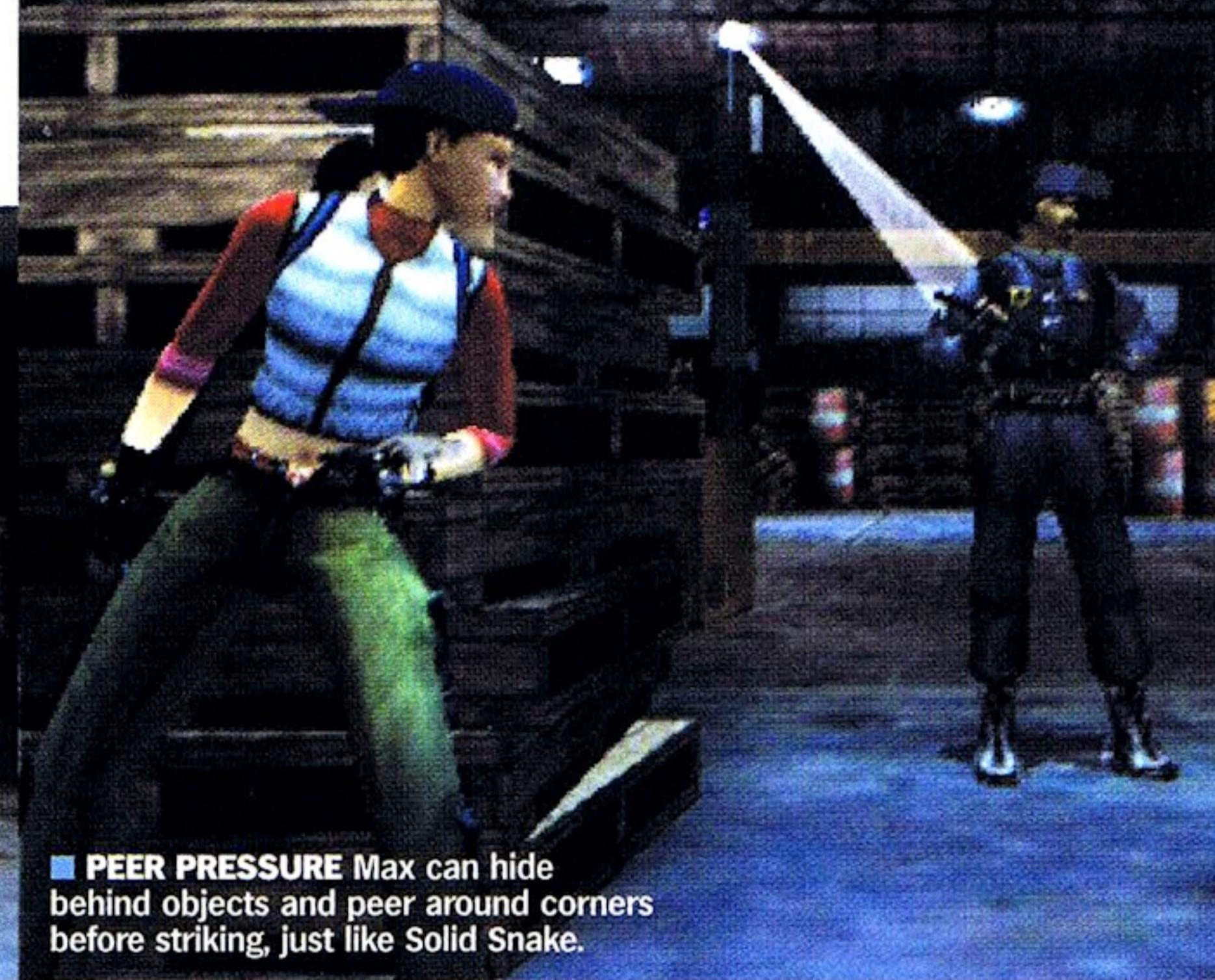




FREEDOM VIDEO



■ **SNEAK PEEK** On some levels, Max needs to use a stealthy approach to reach her goal.



■ **PEER PRESSURE** Max can hide behind objects and peer around corners before striking, just like Solid Snake.

MAX POWER

Max is a one-woman army – strong and fast, with martial arts skills that Bruce Lee would have been proud of.

1



SUPER VISION

By pressing **1**, you can switch from third-person to first-person view. The 'super' part of this mode is its built-in zoom function.

2



STEALTH

Like many games, *Dark Angel* allows you to flatten Max against a wall and peer around it. Some of the sections you'll tackle require a real softy-softy approach.

3

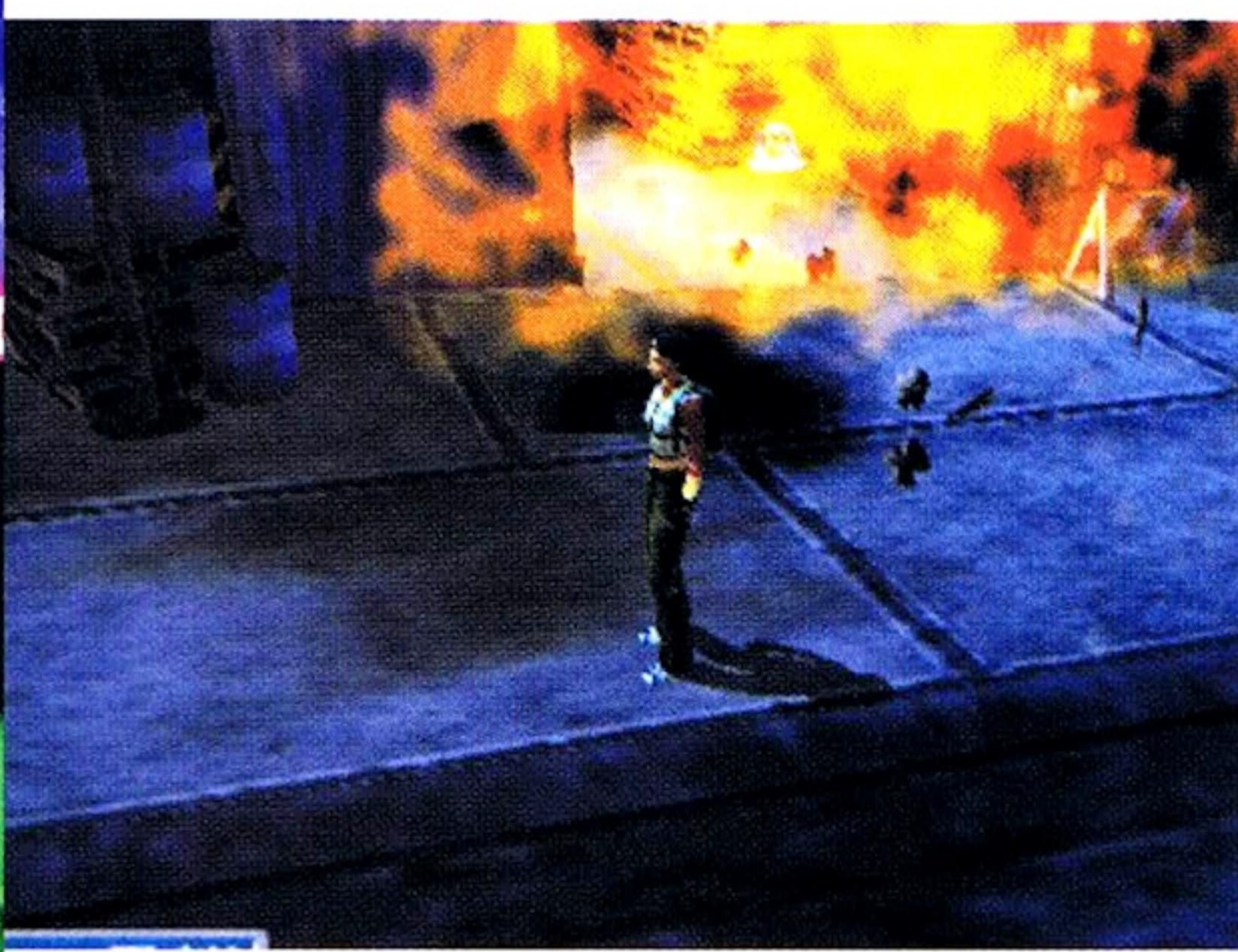


RAGE

When Max unleashes the Rage mode, the effectiveness of her attacks is doubled and she'll be able to pull off some new and special moves. You go girl!



FREEDOM VI



■ **FAMILIAR FEELING** Press switches, find keys and explode walls to find new areas – yawn.



ANGER MANAGEMENT

Max has a Rage bar for deadly attacks.



DARK ANGEL

It's the game of the cancelled TV show. Hardly the best licence.



PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
DEVELOPER: FOX
INTERACTIVE
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.SIERRA.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ **BACK STORY**
Set in Seattle in the year 2019, the US has become a third-world country after terrorists detonated an electromagnetic-pulse bomb to destroy America's technology. Max (Jessica Alba) was one of 12 genetically-enhanced child soldiers who escaped from the lab and into Seattle. Bike courier by day, she becomes a PVC-clad, motorcycle-riding do-gooder by night, helping Logan Cale, a wheelchair-bound rebel, to fight against crime and corruption.



Based on the cancelled US TV series of the same name, *Dark Angel* is a stylistic blend of PS2 games like *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* and *Spider-Man*. The show's concept – a genetically modified girl-soldier escapes an evil corporation to start a new life in Seattle – was part-spun by *Terminator* and *Titanic* Director James Cameron. Set in a dystopian future, *Dark Angel* didn't just offer episodic, superhero-style crime fighting. Serving up more than simple she-fi eye-candy, it weaved its high-kicking action together with a 'who am I?' narrative and a 'will they/won't they' romantic sub-plot between the two lead characters.

Dark Angel on PS2 abandons most of the elements that made the TV show interesting, focusing instead on the thump-'em-up basics. You take control of runaway heroine Max, the product of a hush-hush genetic program that spliced human DNA with animal DNA in pursuit of the ultimate soldier. Blessed – or cursed – with cat-like reflexes, super-strength, super-sight and super-memory, Max must work her way through a series of levels. Guided by hints and pointers from her partner Logan, she can reach the end of a level by either sneaking MGS-style past guards or battling it out in big freeform brawls. Much button-thumping is required.

As you'd expect, Max can kick, punch and jump, and by using these moves in combination, you can perform sweeping kicks, aerial back flips and jaw-busting double-punches. The more Max fights, the higher her Rage power bar rises. When full, Max can unleash a series of devastating (slow-mo) hits with the bursts of dexterity and gravity-defying acrobatics that will be familiar to fans of the show. In addition, Max can also grapple enemies

to throw them around in open combat, or silently attack from behind. A first-person view (with zoom) and a series of pick-up objects – explosives, health packs, gun ammunition – extend the brawling basics, while Max can also hide behind corners and hang from ceilings.

At first glance, *Dark Angel* seems to be a faithful (albeit badly rendered) version of the TV show. But what it lacks is depth. Levels are often little more than a series of fights in search of a key that will give you access to the next level. The locations are limited, the background objects are unusable and your freedom of movement is restricted. Sections of the game are constantly loaded and detract from the game experience, while boss battles offer nothing different to a hundred games that have gone before it.

Dark Angel looks realistic, but not even fans of the series will find much to like here. □ **Dean Evans**

DARK ANGEL

Why we'd buy it:

- We'd like to digitally manipulate Jessica Alba
- Fight scenes look impressive

Why we'd leave it:

- Poor quality animation
- The gameplay is both shallow and restricted

Graphics	A grubby 3D world with poly-people	07
Sound	Jessica Alba provides the voice for the game	06
Gameplay	Find the key, fight the guys, find key, fight...	03
Life span	A lengthy storyline, but will you bother to finish it?	05

What Buffy The Vampire Slayer gets right, Dark Angel gets wrong. You won't be missing out on much.

05

OFFICIAL VERDICT

REVIEW

MYSTIC HEROES/FISHERMAN'S CHALLENGE



■ STAB IN THE DARK A shame they missed!

■ PUFF OF SMOKE There goes the gameplay.



PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: KOEI
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.KOEIGAMES.COM/KOEI_GAMES.HTM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

MYSTIC HEROES

The legend of a game so average it's almost mystical!

X In the world of videogames, being a generic product is not necessarily a huge crime. There are two types of generic and unoriginal games out there: 1) Titles that are completely unoriginal yet manage to be totally enjoyable on their own merits, either sporting spectacular graphics, gameplay or a compelling narrative, and 2) The other, darker, type of generic game, lacking in even basic charm or class. This latter type is most definitely present in the oatmeal-bland mediocrity of *Mystic Heroes*.

You've heard the premise countless times before: An ancient evil, thought to be imprisoned for aeons by the forces of good, has somehow managed to break out of its universe and wreak havoc once again on ours. Only a motley crew of four unlikely heroes can save the land from these malevolent escapees. Cue a bunch of dialogue heavy cut-scenes, followed by the real game.

And that, perhaps, is where *Mystic Heroes* lets itself down most of all. The game basically features large-scale battles, taking place in various areas, where a boss will ultimately test your chosen

character's skills. At a casual glance you could be forgiven for thinking this was in fact a cutsey Anime version of *Dynasty Warriors*. Whereas *Dynasty Warriors* managed to impress with its varied fighting techniques and cool special moves, *Mystic Heroes* is an exercise in pointless and repetitive button mashing, combined with tedious wandering around. Graphically bland and simplistic, *Mystic Heroes* is a game best avoided by anyone who likes to have fun with their games. □ Anthony O'Connor

MYSTIC HEROES

Why we'd buy it:
- It's a *Dynasty Warriors*-style adventure game

Why we'd leave it:
- So shallow it makes *Kingdom Hearts* look like *Metal Gear Solid*.

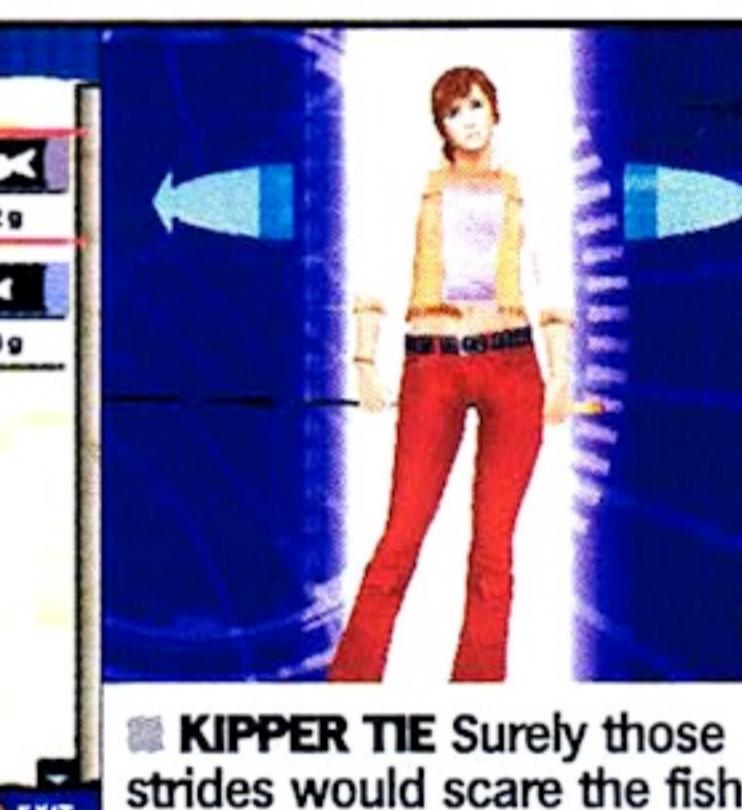
Graphics 05 **Sound** 05 **Gameplay** 04 **Life span** 03

03

OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ HOOK, LINE AND STINKER There must be bigger fish to fry.



■ KIPPER TIE Surely those strides would scare the fish.

FISHERMAN'S CHALLENGE

Mission Impossible: making fishing fun.

X We know what you're thinking. "How can a humble fishing game capture all the adrenaline-pumping highs and soul-crushing lows of the real thing?" Good question. And you're probably also thinking. "Why the hell would I ever want to splash my cash on a game about angling?" Well, Konami has tried to reel you in here.

There's no stinky old men with thermos flasks of soup in *Fisherman's Challenge*. No, you're a hot young thing with a polished speedboat and a box of hard and soft bait, a selection of hooks and weights, and a rack of specialist rods. But ultimately, the premise is simple: find a patch of weeds, cast out your line, and wait for the prized river bass to come a-sniffin'. The second they bite, you've got to yank the bugger out using the left analogue stick to control the tautness of the line, while revolving the right stick to reel the fish in.

Truth be told, it's a buzz the first time you land a catch. Yet even a range of features (Tournament mode, weigh-ins, a two-player racing mode) can't shake the

feeling that this will tempt few casual fishers. This one's for the obsessives only: check out the aquarium, where you can save your best catches to Memory Card and – honestly, we're not making this up – load them up to admire at your leisure.

Ultimately, it boils down to this: *Fisherman's Challenge* isn't relaxing, and you can't club your catch's head against a bench and stick it under a grill afterwards. So what's the point? □ Louis Pattison

PUBLISHER: INFOGRAPHICS
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
PRICE: \$109.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.KONAMI.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ SPEED FREAKS Get your spot and wait for the bites.



FISHERMAN'S CHALLENGE

Why we'd buy it:
- We're totally addicted to bass

Why we'd leave it:
- Fishing is just untranslatable to consoles

Graphics 04 **Sound** 03 **Gameplay** 05 **Life span** 05

04

OFFICIAL VERDICT



SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL

Now you can fish against a friend. Your place or mine?



They said it couldn't be done. They said you couldn't make a game out of fish. But 'they' didn't reckon on *Sega Bass Fishing*, the hit arcade-turned-console game. However, while the original game helped keep Sega's Dreamcast afloat, this sequel is set to sink without trace on PS2.

The original game's graphics had the day-glo zing of Mothercare's summer collection whereas this is strictly Barbour and Rohan. The fish themselves are brilliantly realised but the threadbare scenery, grim draw distance and 'dreary day on the bay' lighting serve to sap any excitement from snaring yourself a fishbeast.

In the old *Bass Fishing* days, the odd fish would see your bait and scuttle over to temptation before deciding whether to nibble or swim for the hills. But this new school are rather more cautious – it's almost as if they'd rather not play at all. Drop a line in right on their nose and they'll follow your fly as you reel it in without ever biting or fleeing. You'll shout at the screen. You'll wiggle

your rod this way and that. But nothing happens. Nobody wants to play a driving game where you drive a Ford Festiva to work on a Monday morning, so who wants a fishing game with all the 'excitement' of real fishing?

The new two-player Duel mode allows you to fish in competition with a friend but we guarantee that unless you're playing against Rex Hunt your guest will be 'casting' his pad aside within the hour. □ Daniel Griffiths

SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL

Why we'd buy it:

- Fishing games can be exciting and innovative

Why we'd leave it:

- Too serious, not enough 'fun'
- No rod peripheral

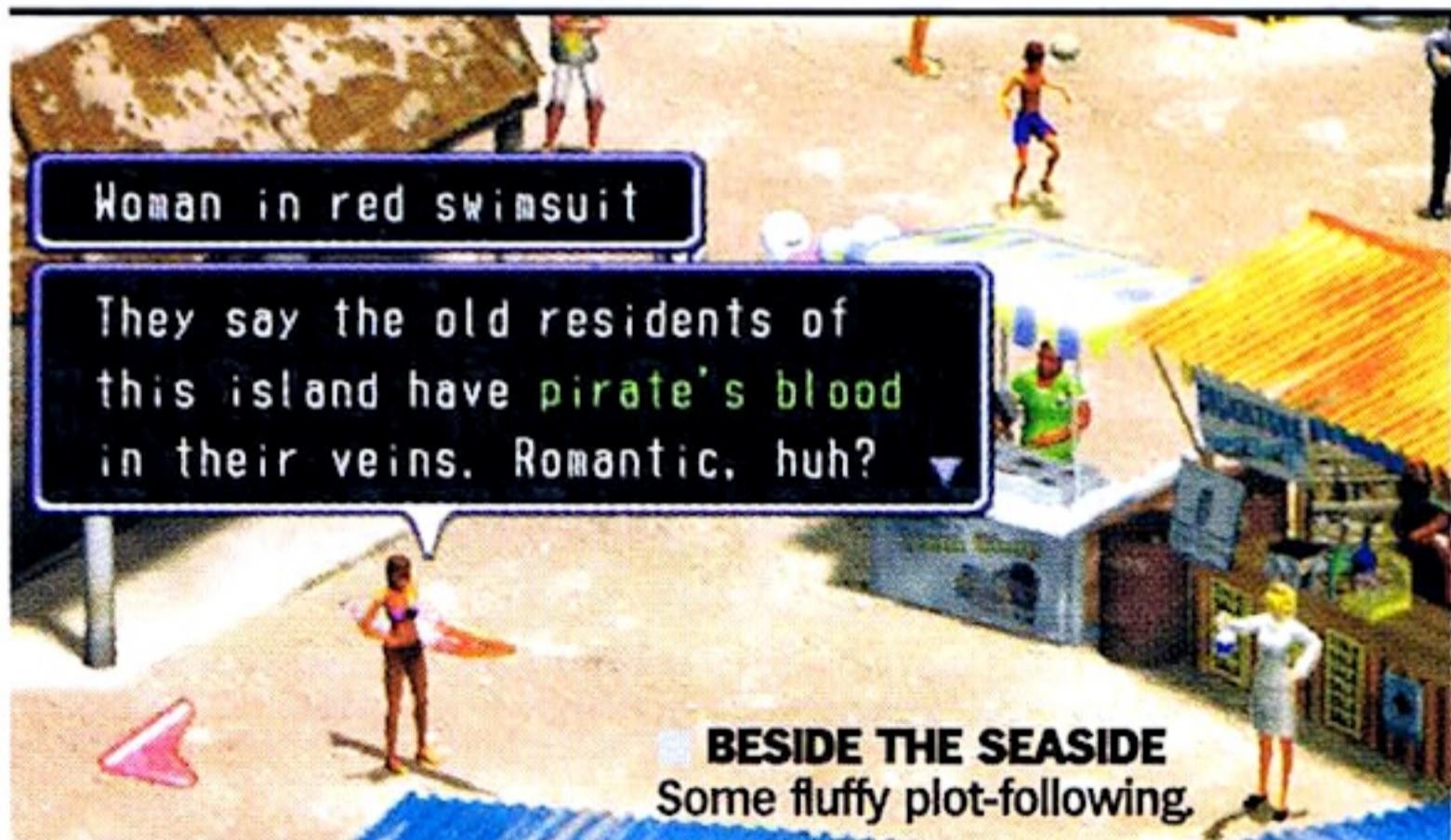
Graphics 05 **Sound** 04 **Gameplay** 05 **Life span** 03



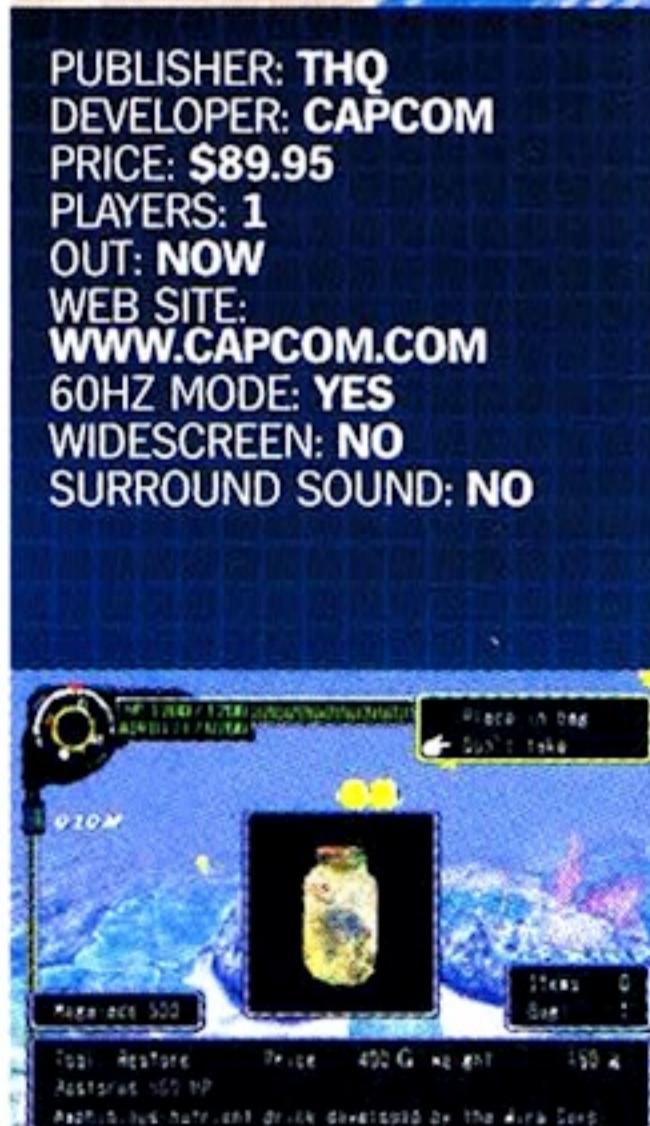
OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ MOUTH PIECE Use different lures to tempt fish to bite.



■ BESIDE THE SEASIDE Some fluffy plot-following.



PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
PRICE: \$89.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.CAPCOM.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

EVERBLUE 2

This place is a dive, let's just get wrecked.



The original *Everblue* may have been visually intriguing but it was about as much fun as walking around a field with a metal detector. To its credit, though, the quirky diving sim often looked fantastic and it had some charm.

Everblue 2 offers more of the same aquatic action. Nearly a year has passed since the events in the first game. You now find yourself stranded in the Caribbean, broke and only able to afford the most basic diving equipment. The game is split into two distinct sections. Valentir is a series of static locations with people to talk to, tasks to complete and places to visit. To earn money, you must complete the featured tasks and salvage lost trinkets from the Caribbean deep. The more money you earn, the better the equipment you can buy, which in turn enables you to dive deeper in search of better treasure.

Then there are the beautiful 3D dive sequences – dappled lighting, bright coral reefs, darting fish, dolphins and turtles. The longer you swim and salvage, the more

locations become available. But, there are no puzzles. Your brain is rarely tugged, let alone stretched. Instead you follow a speech-bubble storyline and perform a series of fetch-and-carry missions. Atmospheric it may be, but *Everblue 2* is often repetitive and tiresome.

There is little challenge here. It amuses but doesn't engage; frustrates rather than delights. How ironic that a game about the ocean has so little depth. □ Dean Evans

EVERBLUE 2

Why we'd buy it:

- Atmospheric and calming sub-aquatic, er, action

Why we'd leave it:

- Repetitive and limited gameplay

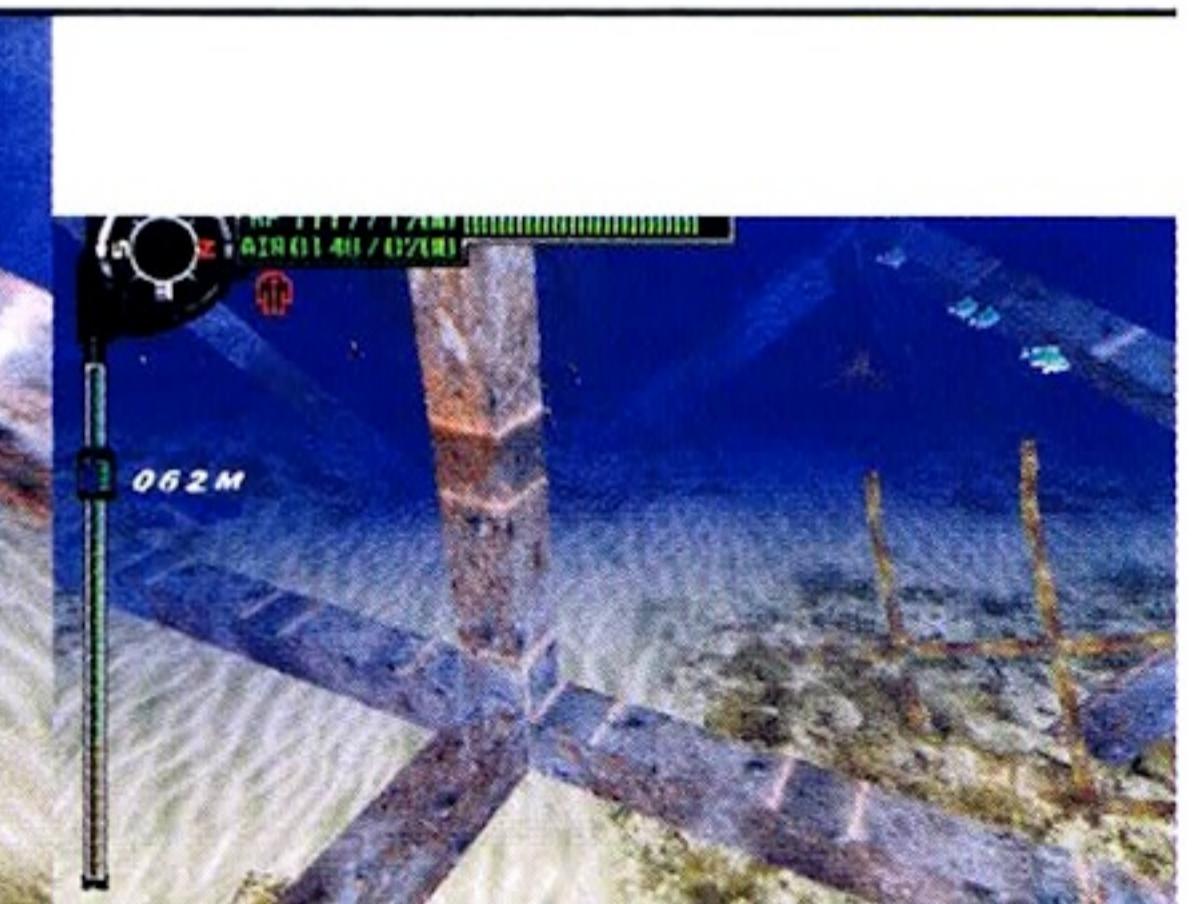
Graphics 05 **Sound** 04 **Gameplay** 04 **Life span** 04



OFFICIAL VERDICT



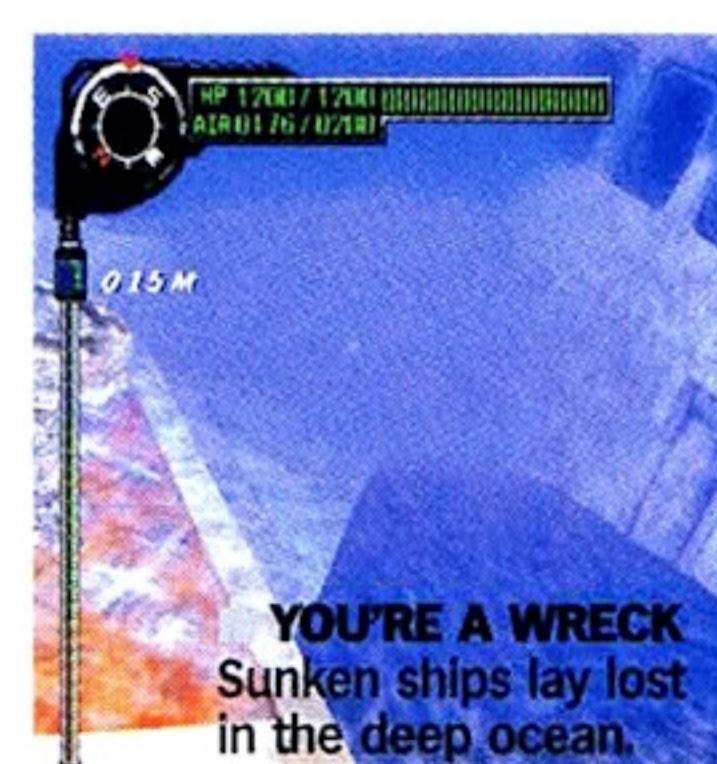
■ SUB AQUA Dive deep to search for buried treasure.



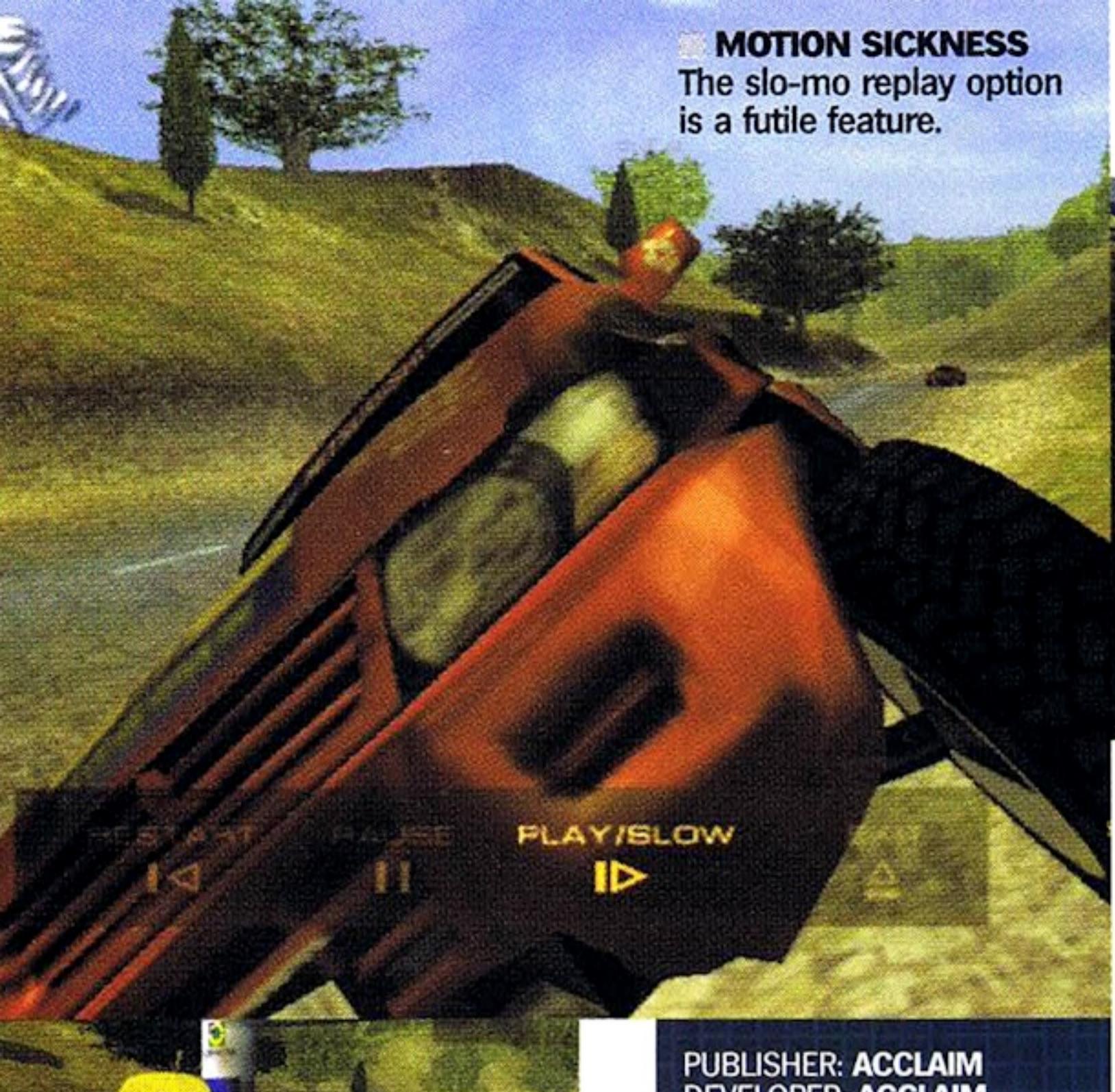
■ OCEAN'S 11
The 3D dive sequences are eerily calming.



■ DEEPER AND DEEPER
Buy better stuff, dive deeper.



■ YOU'RE A WRECK
Sunken ships lay lost in the deep ocean.



RESULTS		
POS	NAME / TEAM	VEHICLE
106	L Cohen 4 Roues Motrices	Mitsubishi Pajero
107	R Cretier CLC	Porsche Cayenne
108	J Azer	Ford Ranger
109	J Mettje	Toyota HDJ80
110	M Zvonimir	Land-Rover Defender
111	M Ezzedine	Nissan BDL
112	W Claeys	Toyota HDJ80

LEADER BORED
You don't want to be at the bottom.

DAKAR 2

We've been through the desert on a horse of a game.



Ever since Sega invented the 3D rally game in 1995 there has been a steady flow of off-road titles vying for our attention. In the PS2 era, that flow has become a deluge – the bandwagon careered off track long ago. The better examples of the crowded genre take the realistic fork, but a few lazy developers still choose to opt for 'arcade' (read 'basic') handling.

Dakar 2 feels light and twitchy next to something like Colin McRae's weighty sophistication. Like an arcade racer that hasn't been made by an arcade developer, everything feels wrong. The premise is a real-life race between 4x4 cars, motorbikes or trucks that takes place annually from Paris to the Senegalese capital Dakar. It's kind of like Wacky Races, without Dastardly and Muttley. The game is divided into 12 stages which take the form of different courses or laps on a track.

Locations are as varied as the licence allows, but the difficulty curve is all wrong. By far the toughest races occur halfway through the game where you have to

negotiate the sprawling Sahara, devoid of co-driver support or track indicators. This would be fine (and in keeping with the subject material) but for the fact that the other 100-plus competitors seem to know exactly where they are going at all times.

Dakar 2 won't take long for the competent to complete, with the only replay value provided by unlockable vehicles. With so many other better racers available, what's the point? □ Simon Parkin

2

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM STUDIOS CHELTENHAM
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.DAKAR.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES

AUTOMOBILIA A 4x4 truck is one of your options for the race.

3

DAKAR 2

Why we'd buy it:

- A few fresh ideas to add to the rallying genre

Why we'd leave it:

- Feels like you're driving a camera around the track

Graphics

05

Dakar's the star? Not

Sound

05

really. Like its forefather, there's little here to excite.

Gameplay

05

Life span

05

05

OFFICIAL VERDICT

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ZAPPER: ONE WICKED CRICKET

Forget Disney, a bug's life is actually pretty dull.



Oh dear. The creator of *Frogger* must be turning in his grave. At least he would be if he wasn't still alive and kicking. While it may seem to the rest of us like a lifetime since *Frogger* represented videogame innovation, apparently developer Blitz Games reckons its simplistic gameplay is still cutting edge stuff.

Despite the recent success of platform games like *Ratchet & Clank*, which offer spacious worlds and an extensive freedom of movement, poor Zapper the cricket finds himself trapped in a claustrophobic cartoon environment and bound to an invisible grid that allows him to move one space at a time.

Worse still, Blitz Games has taken the seriously outdated gameplay mechanics of *Frogger* and married them with that other platform game no-no; the mindless collect 'em up! Think limping around sluggishly looking for mysterious eggs and fireflies for no real reason can be fun? Think again, but mercifully the 'story' mode is over quite quickly.

Then there's the poorly realised multiplayer mode. As if trying to move around in such a cramped space wasn't tough enough already, this frustration takes on a whole

new meaning when you throw three of your friends in there as well. The multiplayer mode consists of a handful of different mini-games that all ultimately end up with everyone zapping each other a bit, within the confines of a shoebox-sized arena. Pretty soon the objective of the multiplayer mode is not who can zap the most opponents, but who can zap Zapper out of the PS2 the fastest and put *TimeSplitters 2* back in.

Unless you enjoy the aggravation of trial and error gameplay within horribly linear environments, play it safe and leave Zapper in its wrapper. □ **Tristan Ogilvie**

■ **SHALLOW GRAVE** This game needs one pronto.

PUBLISHER: INFOGRAPHICS
DEVELOPER: BLITZ GAMES
PRICE: \$69.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.BLITZGAMES.COM/ZAPPER
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: MULTI TAP



ZAPPER: ONE WICKED CRICKET

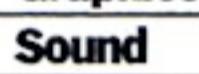
Why we'd buy it:

- Been in a coma since 1982
- We've never seen a game before

Why we'd leave it:

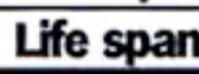
- We've played better designed games on mobile phones

Graphics



You know those games

Sound



that come out when a

Gameplay



console has died? This

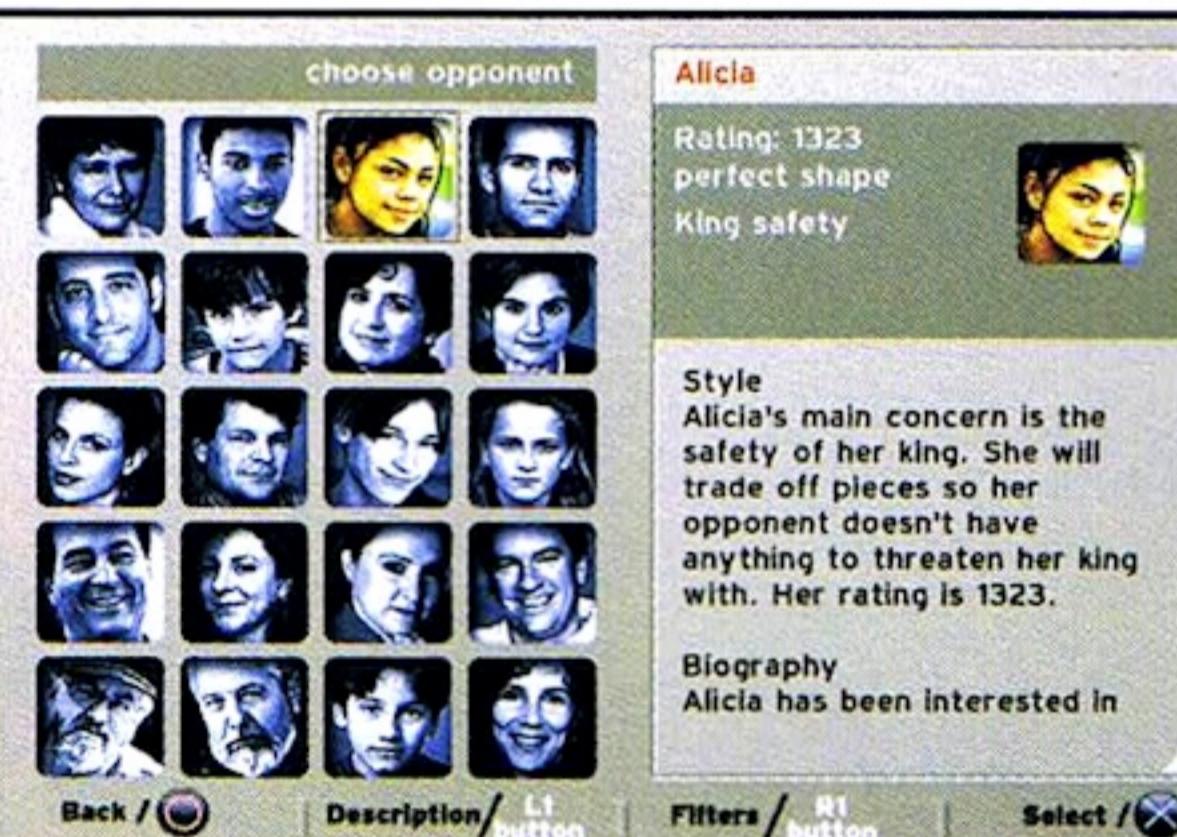
Life span



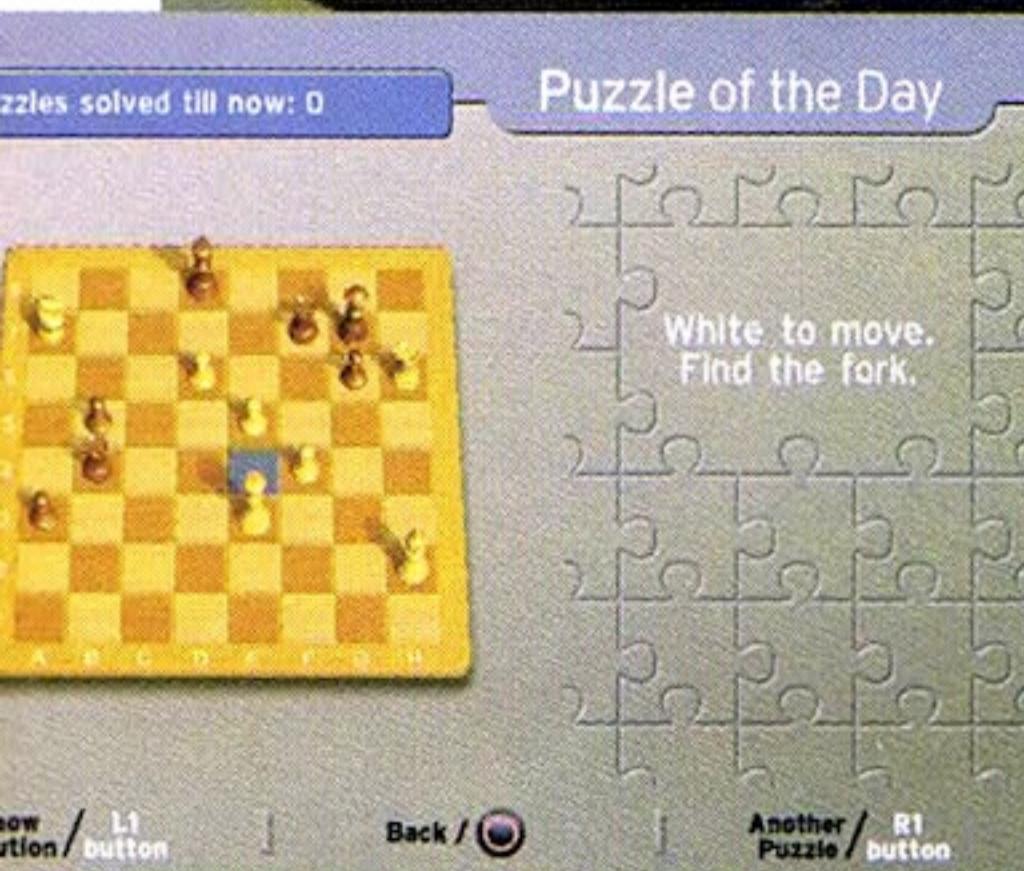
one snuck out early.



OFFICIAL VERDICT



■ **MONSTERS INC.** There are plenty of different monster races to choose from.



PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
DEVELOPER: UBI SOFT
PRICE: \$79.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.UBISOFT.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: NO



CHESSMASTER

Ubi Soft tries to crack the PS2 chessnuts!

X Chess. It's older than Grandpa Simpson and just as confusing. People have been playing it for centuries without coming close to mastering it, and even super computers with brains the size of planets still get their arses kicked on a regular basis. So why would you bother with all the hard work? Well, because it can also be a hell of a lot of fun too – especially when you manage to take out your mate's Queen with a pissy little Pawn.

When it comes to bringing the chess experience to PS2, Ubi Soft's *Chessmaster* does a nice job. There are tutorials, with voiceovers, that walk you through absolutely every aspect of the game. Everything from the origins and abilities of each piece, all the way to advanced strategies, is covered in boggling detail. There are also a wealth of famous games you can recreate and partake in. And it goes without saying that there are a range of difficulties and playing styles that you can kit the computer out with to create a solid challenge for any ability level. All of these options have been present in PC chess simulations for

years but it's still welcome in this PS2 edition.

For a little extra fun there's also a battle chess mode that replaces the traditional pieces with gargoyles, goblins and trolls. Whenever a piece is taken in this mode a small skirmish takes place, with the winning player usually giving the loser a good stabbing. This mode makes for a nice change but the disappointingly repetitive attacks and the awkward viewpoint are a turn off. □ **Narayan Pattison**

CHESSMASTER

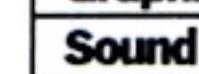
Why we'd buy it:

- We're rabid chess fans with no access to a PC

Why we'd leave it:

- We've got a PC and have had access to these games for years

Graphics



Tonnes of gameplay for chessnuts but nothing

Sound



that will entice casual

Gameplay



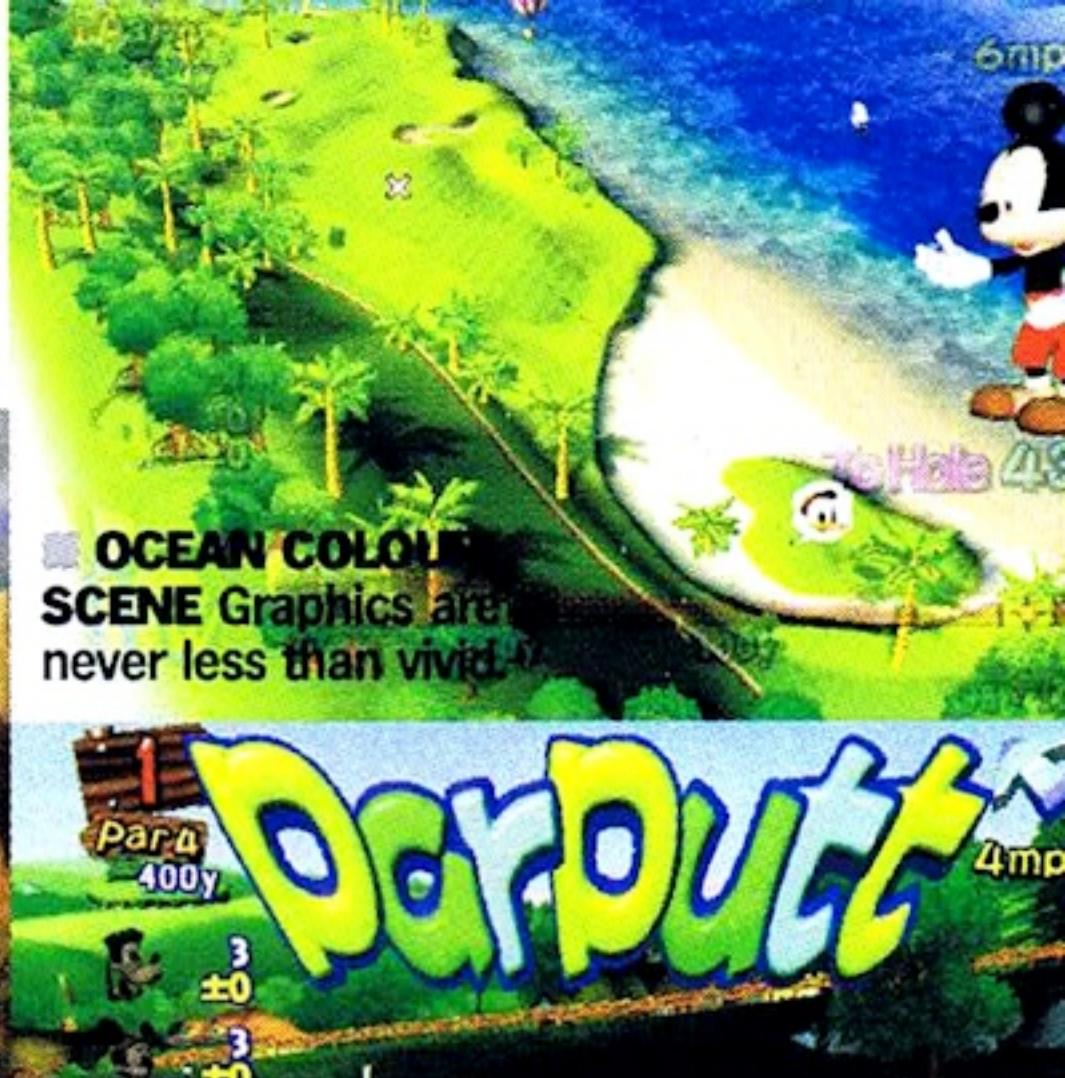
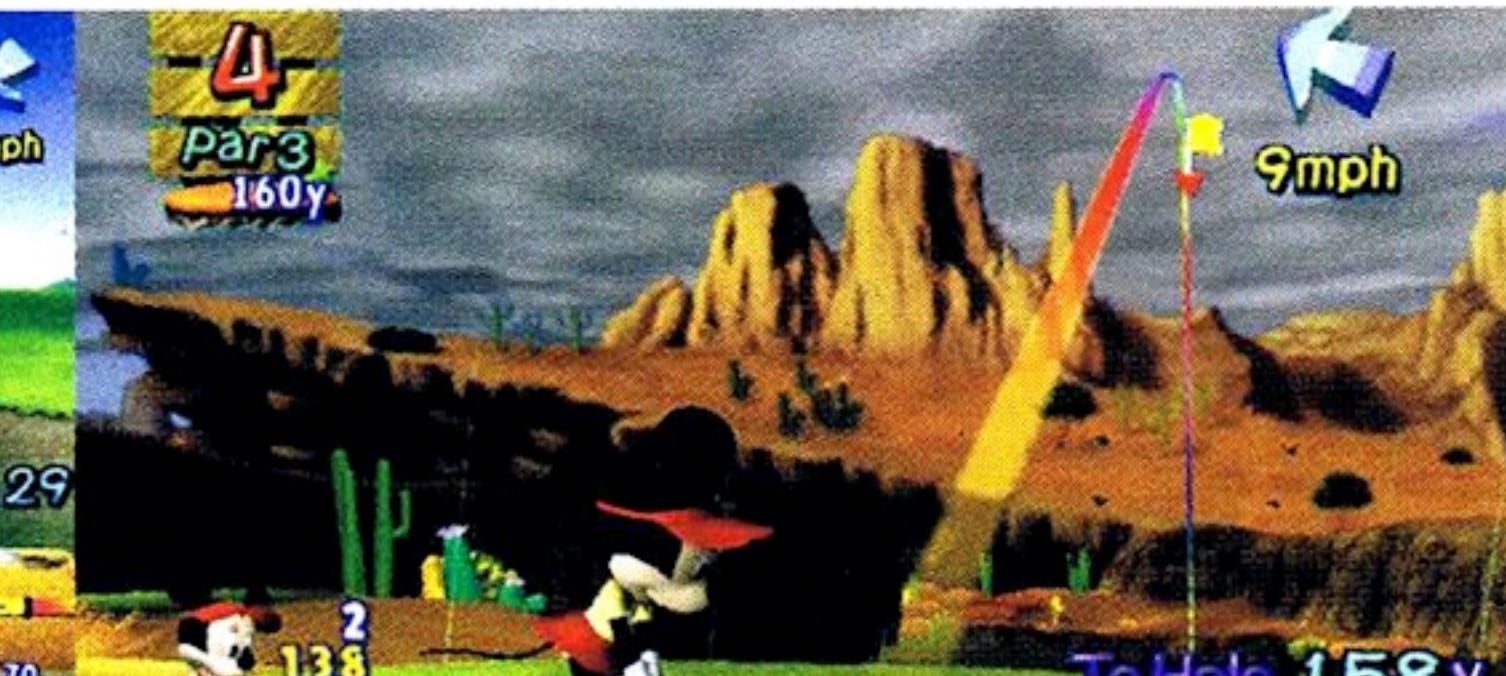
gamers.



OFFICIAL VERDICT

REVIEW

DISNEY GOLF/LEGO ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS



PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: DISNEY
INTERACTIVE
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-4
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.UKEA.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO

■ SOFT CEL. Legends of Disney in poly-perfection.



DISNEY GOLF

Birdies, eagles and a duck called Donald.

X You might approach Disney Golf thinking it will be childlike and brightly shallow. You might expect the odd sing-a-long, talking golf balls or giant weights falling from the sky to crush underperforming golfers. But Disney Golf has none of the wackiness associated with the classic cartoonery. There are no dancing teacups or flying elephants, no Zippedy Doo-Dah or I'm The King Of The Swingers (although the latter would have been apt). Instead, it's a surprisingly playable golf game.

Of course, this isn't an entirely straight game of golf. There are several recognisable and realistic modes of play – Strokeplay, Matchplay and Skins, plus combination play for a pair of two-player teams, Long Drive or Near Pin contests and a Challenge option where you play against AI characters. Each toon has their own playing style. Donald Duck is a good all-rounder, while Goofy is a power player with a hefty swing. You can set handicaps and view 3D fly-bys of the six available courses, including tropical and mountain landscapes with 18 holes set in

the American desert. Arcade-wise, golfers can select power-ups to enhance play, sending the ball further, negating wind effects and slowing down the swing meter.

With its bright, colouring-book graphics, Disney Golf looks every inch a game aimed at kids who watch The Tweenies. But with realistic options, multiplayer modes and unlockable courses and characters, there's much to like. It's a good, family game that can be as complex or as idiot-proof as you want it to be. □ Dean Evans

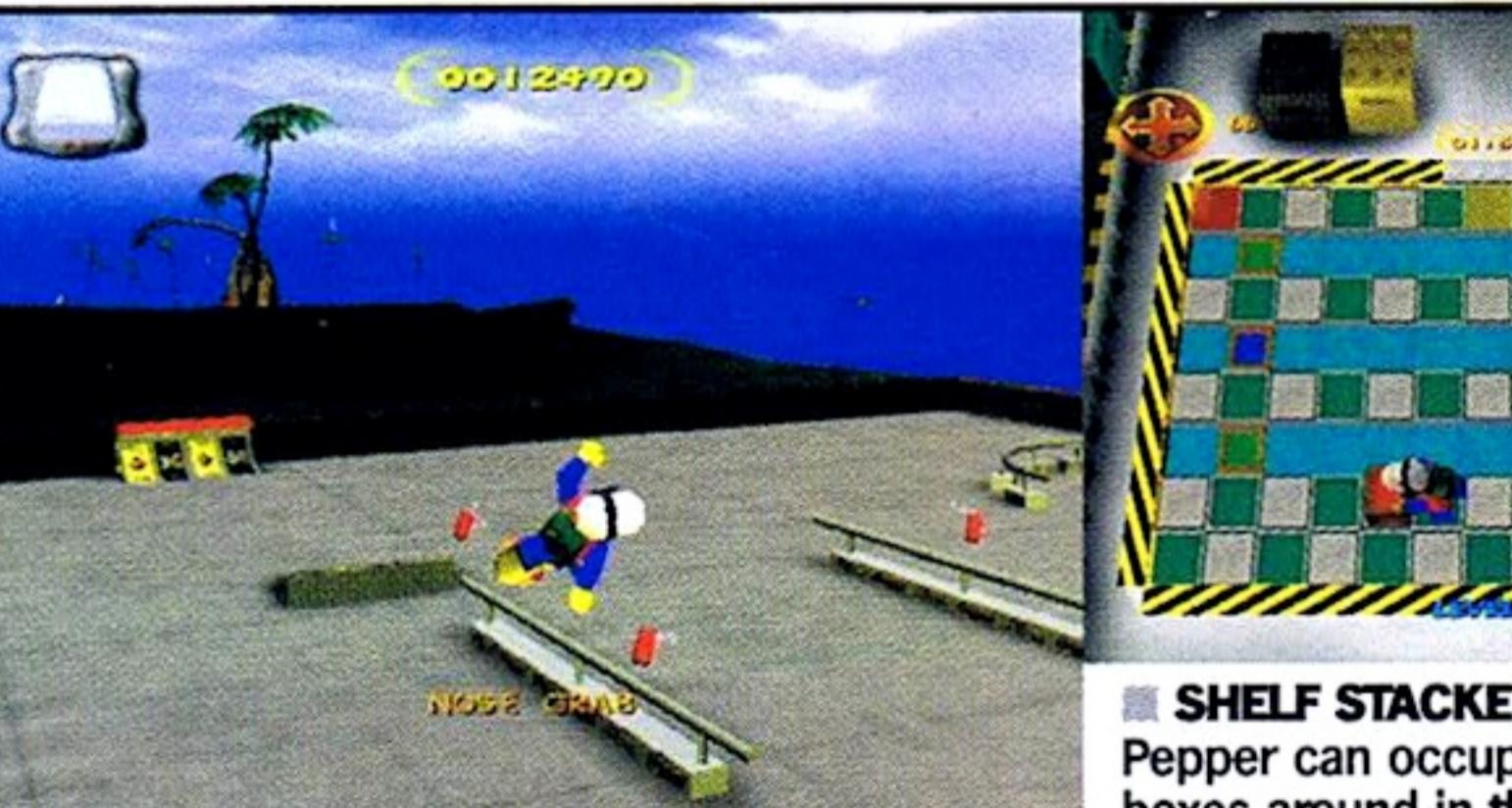
DISNEY GOLF

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- Real golf games suck the fun out of ball-thwacking	- Only eight characters, only six courses

Graphics 07	PGA Tour Golf + Walt
Sound 05	Disney toon icons = a
Gameplay 07	surprisingly enjoyable
Life span 05	and playable game.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

■ CRAZY GOLF Skins, strokeplay and matchplay options are all available.



■ SHELF STACKER In between stunt gigs Pepper can occupy himself by shoving boxes around in the local supermarket.

LEGO ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS

Little bricks make a big impression.

X It's very rare that you associate Lego titles with ambitious game development. Surely Lego is for the 'younger' gamer, and therefore must be as exciting as playing with plastic bricks? But Extreme Stunts is a new breed of Lego experience which is best described as GTA meets Stuntman meets Tony Hawk's, for kids. Wow!

You take the role of stuntman and Lego Island resident Pepper Roni (get it?). His priority is to complete stunt challenges for a film studio, shooting on various locations around the island. These begin with a standard car pursuit but eventually there are bikes, jet skis and planes for Pepper to show off his dexterity and daring.

Between stunt jobs, Pepper roams the island, chatting to the yellow-headed inhabitants and completing various mini challenges such as acquiring a drivers' licence which lets you to take any car you fancy – like GTA, without the hand gestures and automatic weaponry. Pepper can also grab a skateboard out of his backpack to flip and grind his way through the town.

If that sounds appealing, remember: it is aimed at kids, so the challenges are simple. But this shouldn't detract from the fact that there's a very tight control system, adequate graphics and decent replay value.

This is inoffensive, simple gaming. More importantly, it's playable and doesn't treat the younger gamer like a complete incompetent. So if a little 'un needs something to do during a sunny delight comedown, this is definitely worth a look. □ David Harrison

LEGO ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS

Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:
- We have a younger sibling who won't stand for kidder rubbish	- Kids break things and we can't afford a new PS2

Graphics 05	A pick and mix of ideas
Sound 08	that's perfectly weighted
Gameplay 05	for its younger audience.
Life span 05	A small success.

OFFICIAL VERDICT

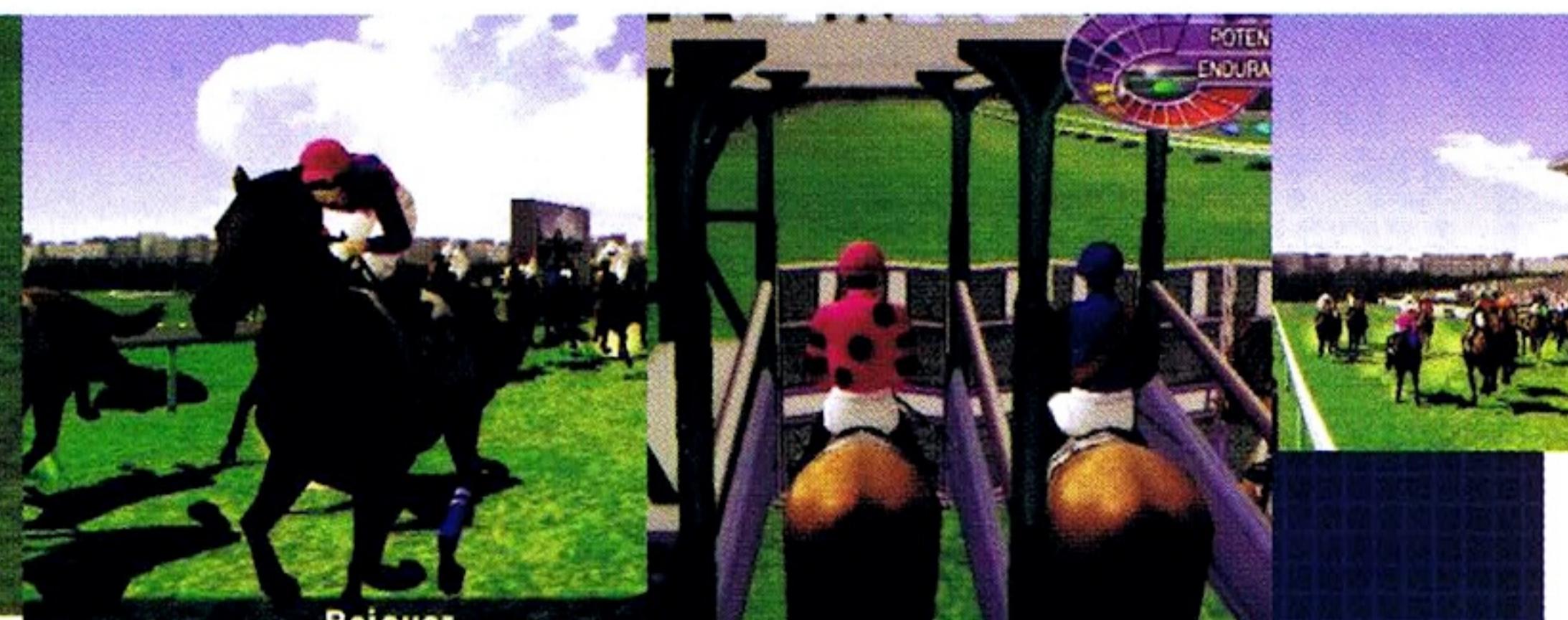
PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: SILICON DREAMS
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEB SITE: WWW.UKEA.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO



■ HEAVYWEIGHT RAMP You must achieve bronze or higher to progress.

REVIEW

G1 JOCKEY 3/EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING



G1 JOCKEY 3

Koei continues to flog its dead horse.



At the fringe of every gaming catalogue there's always a plethora of obscure titles. Not obscure in the sense of them being cult classics, but obscure because they cause the average gamer to scratch their head in confusion and ponder "Why?" G1 Jockey 3 is such a title.

Ranking right up there with bizarre gaming premises such as bass fishing, G1 Jockey gives players the opportunity to ride horses, make money from said horse riding, and then ride more horses. To be fair to the eccentric title, Jockey does feature a staggering amount of depth on the subject. Those expecting a simple car game with equine vehicles substituting for autos will be surprised.

Players have to choose a horse, convince backers to fund their racing, maintain good relationships with various stables and then partake in ludicrous amounts of character dialogue, the sum of which would put *Final Fantasy X* to shame. Depending on your opinion of horse racing and its usual baggage, this will either entice or

turn off in equal measures, but the real meat of the game is the actual racing. This, unfortunately, is where the game goes from merely odd to downright dodgy. The racing itself is repetitive and graphically ugly. Mashing the buttons repeatedly while staggering around a bland green course over and over again does not a good game make. Unless you have a fevered obsession with all things horse racing related, G1 Jockey 3 is one title better left at the starting gate. □ Anthony O'Connor

G1 JOCKEY 3

Why we'd buy it:

- Horse racing fans may like it
- It's an inoffensive time waster

Graphics

Sound

Gameplay

Life span

03 A bizarre and pointless title that really only offers curiosity value.

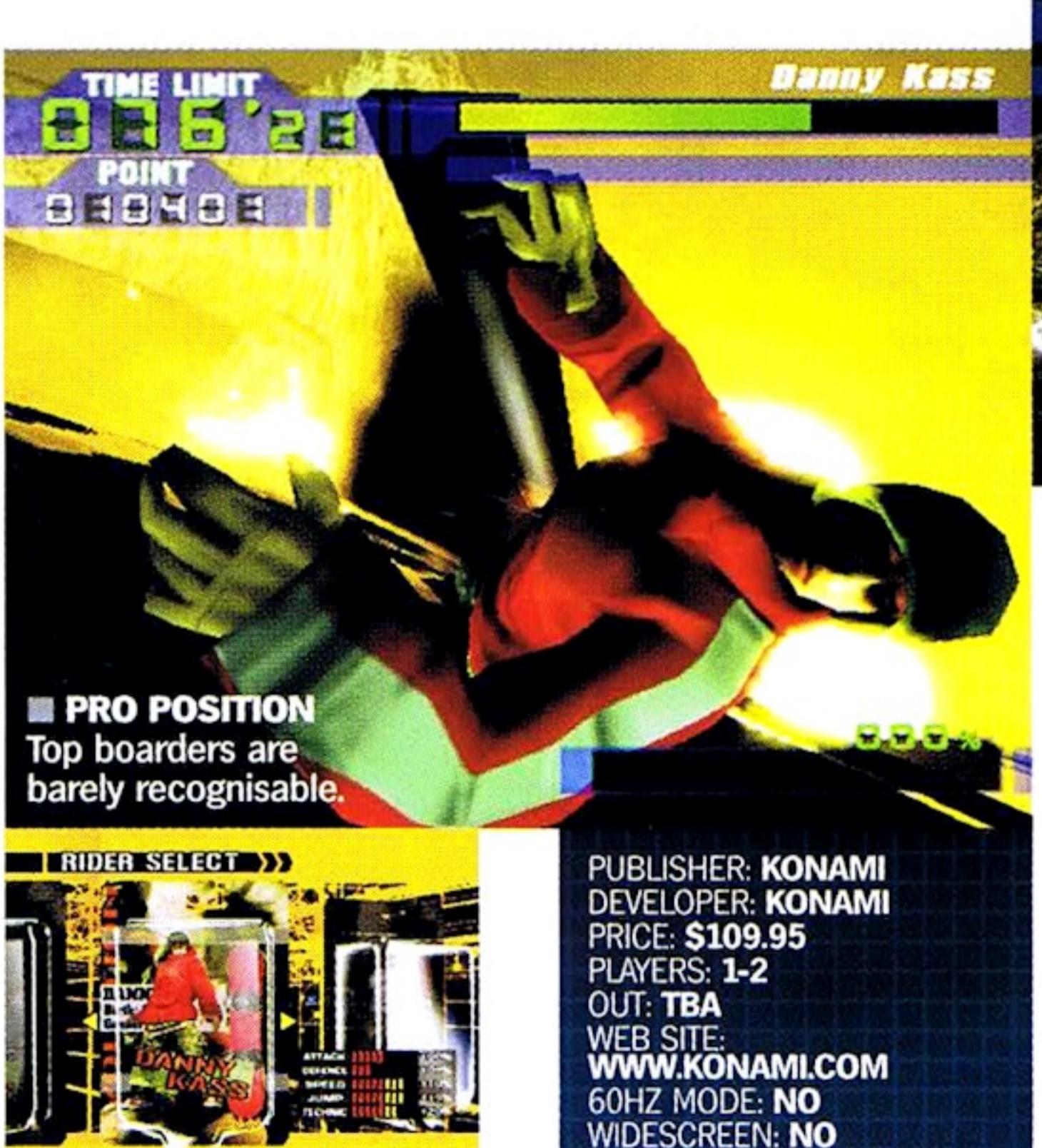
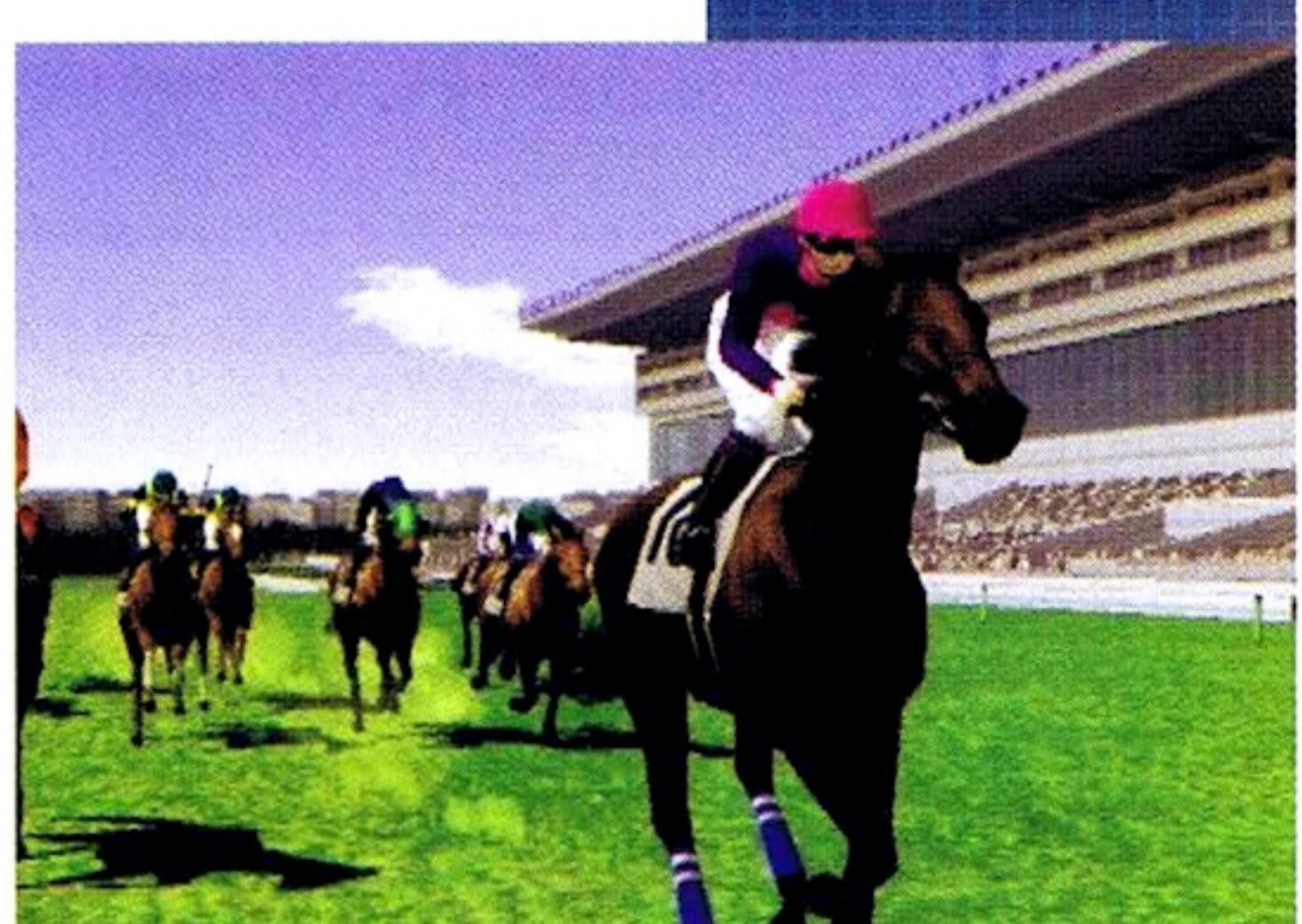
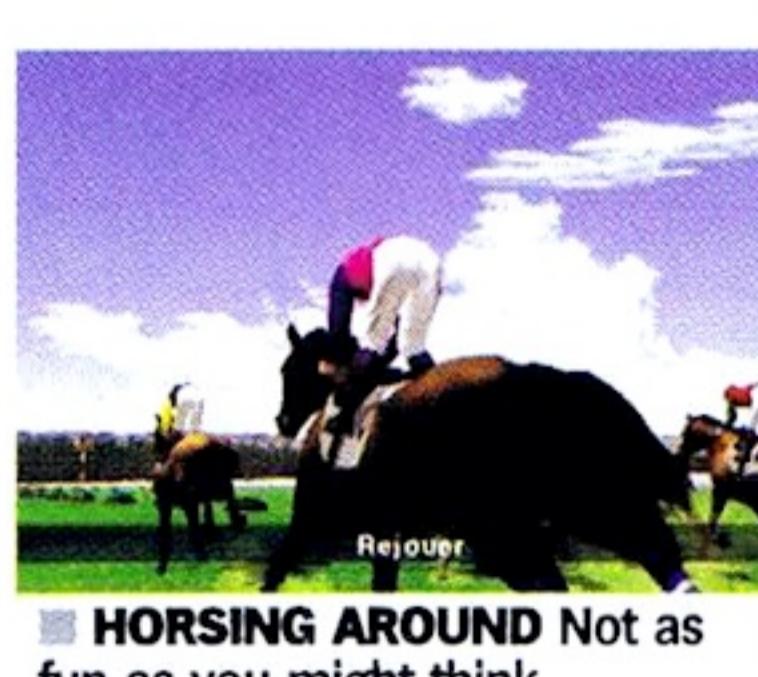
Why we'd leave it:

- It looks bad and plays bad
- It's dull and repetitive

03

OFFICIAL VERDICT

PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: KOEI
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.KOEI.CO.JP/
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
PERIPHERALS: NO

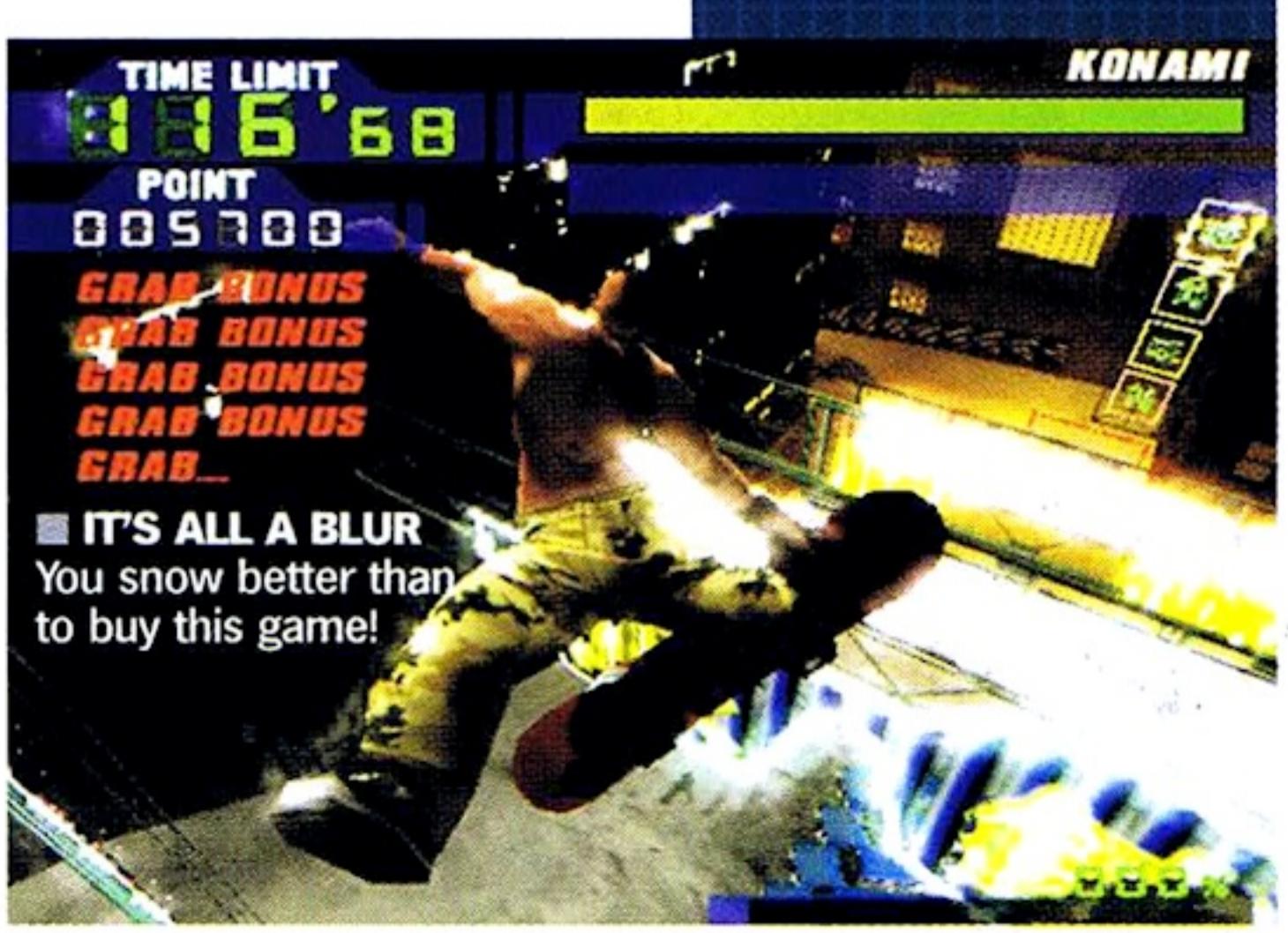


RIDER SELECT

DANNY KASS

PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
PRICE: \$109.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: TBA
WEB SITE: WWW.KONAMICOM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES

OH DANNY BOY the bargain bin is calling...



EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING

Making games while on the piste? Konami should know better.



If you think the one thing missing from the current crop of snowboarding titles is the ability to whack other racers in the face with a motorbike chain, this could be the game for you. On the other hand, if you don't enjoy handing over \$110 for unplayable gaming, you might prefer to give it a miss. It's essentially the ancient Mega Drive title *Road Rash* on snow, with all the fun and playability surgically removed. As an escapee from some future prison, you've got to slide down a mountain while bashing an endless swarm of pursuers. There's a bundle of pro snowboarders to pick from too – presumably refugees from some other snowboarding title who got lost in development.

The combat is completely hit-and-miss – the most reliable technique is to tap the punch and kick buttons as fast as possible. And having so many bad guys all over the place makes the racing aspect frustrating. Luckily, most of them are not particularly tough – punch them a couple of times and they vanish in a puff of smoke.

The graphics are especially lacklustre. There is a consistently smooth frame rate, but the textures and animations don't look even halfway finished. The lesser characters are badly sculpted blobs, with only the occasional boss looking like the designers have spent any time on him. Quite what *Evolution Snowboarding* is doing on the same label as *MGS2* and *Pro Evolution Soccer* is anybody's guess. □ Martin Kitts

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING

Why we'd buy it:

- Snowboarding is cool

Graphics

Sound

Gameplay

Life span

02 Ugly graphics, irritating music and barely any gameplay to speak of. A poor excuse for a game.

02

OFFICIAL VERDICT

DVD
OF THE
MONTH



■ RUN, FOREST!!! Tom reacts with horror at the *Bonfire Of The Vanities* 2 pitch.

Road To Perdition

Tommy guns at the ready for Sam Mendes' gangster epic.

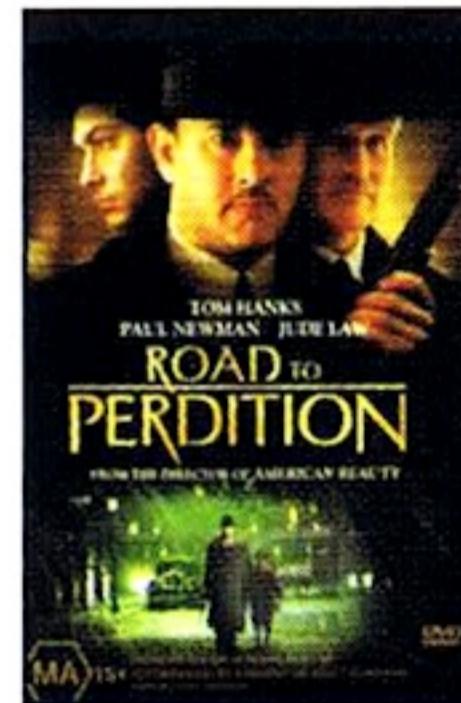
FILM: Illinois, 1931. Tom Hanks is Michael Sullivan, a fearsome hitman in the employ of the man he calls 'Father', local mob boss John Rooney (Paul Newman) – whose actual son Connor (Daniel Craig) is a twisted, loose cannon. After a shocking betrayal by Connor, Sullivan is forced to go on the run. Leaving behind a murdered family and with a contract out on his life, Sullivan's surviving son, Michael Jnr (Tyler Hoechlin), becomes an accomplice in his father's cold-blooded quest for revenge.

Made in-between his Oscar-laden debut *American Beauty* and his current project, *Getting Off With The Lovely Kate Winslet*, Sam Mendes' drama fits snugly alongside the likes of *The Untouchables* and *Miller's Crossing* in the second echelon of gangster classics (top dogs? *The Godfather* and *GoodFellas*, natch).

The story arc is fairly predictable and Mendes is arguably so intent on making a 'masterpiece' that the movie sometimes wallows in atmosphere at the expense of narrative drive. But thanks to its evocative focus on the relationship between fathers and sons, the uniformly superb performances, and a magnificent visual style, *Road To Perdition* emerges as a film of rare class. **8/10**

EXTRAS: A *Making Of* that takes in the usual mix of talking heads and on-set footage, but benefits from a fascinating bunch of interviewees. Whether it's examining the links between the original graphic novel and the film, or congratulating veterans Paul Newman and ace cinematographer Conrad L Hall (who has since, sadly, passed away) it offers a valuable insight into the film. Sam Mendes' commentary is a great example of the form and reveals that his aim was to blend the excitement of a pulp gangster movie with something more profound. There are also 11 deleted scenes (see *Extra! Extra!*). **7/10**

VERDICT: A beautifully-crafted gangster drama. It isn't thrill-a-minute, but it's a road well worth travelling. □ LH



Director Sam Mendes
Starring Tom Hanks, Paul Newman, Tyler Hoechlin, Jude Law, Daniel Craig, Stanley Tucci, Claran Hinds
Distributor Fox/Dreamworks
Out Now
Price \$34.95
Extras Director's commentary. Deleted scenes. Making Of featurette. Photo gallery. Production notes. Cast and crew biographies.



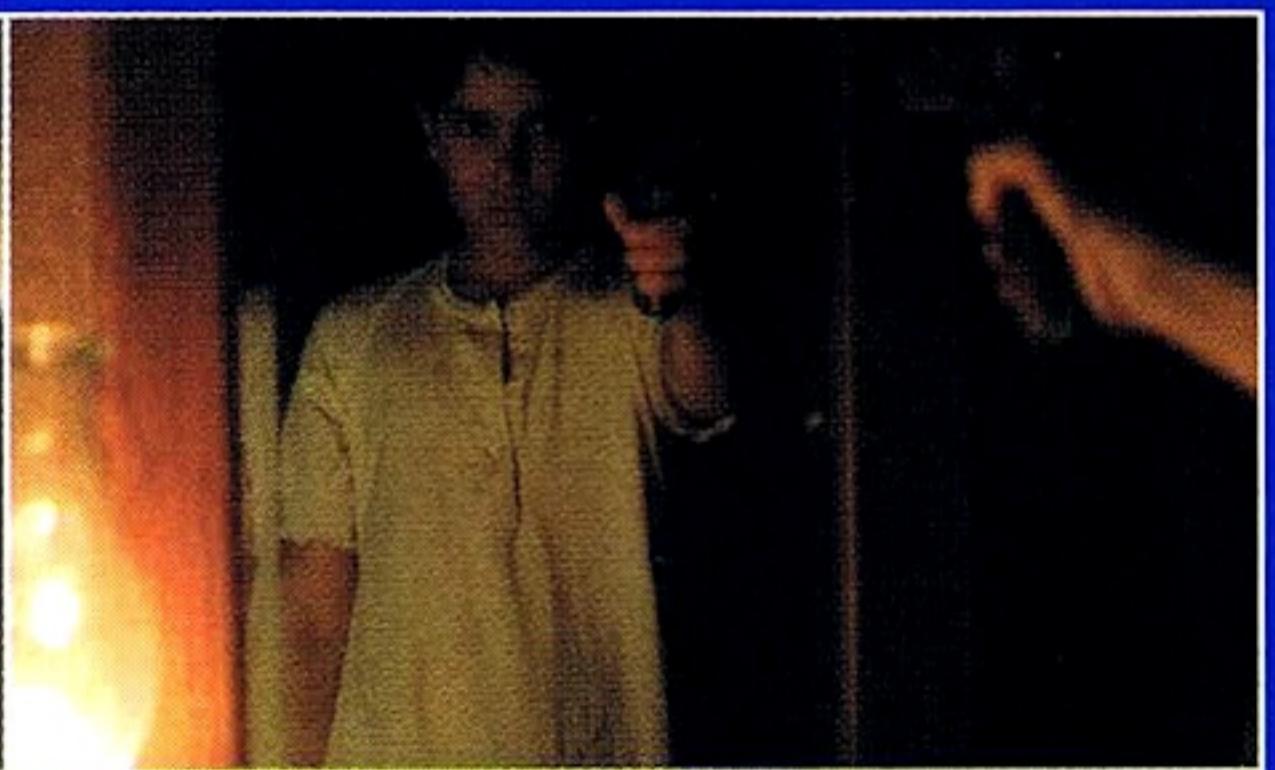
EXTRA! EXTRA!

Road To Perdition's deleted scenes are in a different league to DVD-dom's usual throwaway spools of unused footage. There are 11 scenes, each accompanied by an optional commentary from Director Sam Mendes analysing the scenes and explaining his reasons for leaving them on the cutting room floor. Many of them would have enriched the finished movie – it's a shame that these two scenes, especially, didn't make the final cut.



Mr Capone

A figure that looms over the movie but never actually appears, Al Capone did originally feature in a single scene, as portrayed by Anthony LaPaglia. Sam Mendes explains: "We realised as we cut the film together that you felt Capone's presence more keenly if you didn't meet him. Partly because he is this mythic, iconic figure."



The Image Of His Father

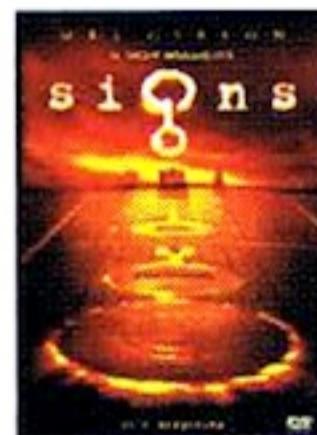
Sullivan's greatest fear is that his son will follow in his footsteps. This is explored in a scene where Michael Jnr poses in front of a mirror with his Dad's pistol. It was deleted as it was thought to lessen the impact of the film's finale. "I wanted to establish his obsession with guns, the likelihood that he would turn into his father," says Mendes.

dvdREVIEWS

Recommended viewing for your PlayStation 2 cinema system.

Signs

Director M Night Shyamalan/Starring Mel Gibson, Joaquin Phoenix, Rory Culkin, Abigail Breslin, Cherry Jones, M Night Shyamalan/Distributor Buena Vista/Out May/Price TBA



FILM: After doing ghosts in *The Sixth Sense* and superheroes in *Unbreakable*, M Night Shyamalan turns his genre-bending attention to that other blockbuster staple: aliens. Former man of the cloth Mel Gibson lives on a farm with his brother Joaquin Phoenix and two young kids. He's experiencing a crisis of faith following the death of his wife. And when a giant crop circle appears outside the house, followed by UFO sightings across the globe, his emotional state is stretched to breaking point.

Equal parts low-key family drama and alien invasion suspense, *Signs* is a slow-burner and is all the better

for it. By focusing on character rather than plot development, the film generates an eerie, expectant tone that – when the true purpose of the aliens is revealed – culminates in some serious edge-of-the-seat tension. This time round there's no jaw-dropping final twist, but the plot threads weave together expertly to form an ending that is both satisfying and even a little moving. **7/10**

EXTRAS: An excellent six-part Making Of that covers everything from a screenwriting diary to the creation of crop circles for the film. New interviews with the crew plus on-set chinwags with the cast. And a bundle of deleted scenes. **7/10**

VERDICT: A gripping, small-scale take on *War Of The Worlds*. □ LH



EXTRA! EXTRA!

Even critically-acclaimed multi-millionaire Writer/Directors have to start somewhere.

On all his DVD releases M Night Shyamalan includes a short film he made as a kid that fits into the same genre. This time it's his first creature movie, entitled *Pictures*. Night's intro stresses its cheapness and his own awful acting, but if you're expecting badness then you'd better multiply that by a factor of 'cack'. Even Lisa Riley would turn her chubby nose up at this.



■ **FOILED AGAIN** The kids don tin foil hats to stop those pesky aliens reading their minds.



Vandread

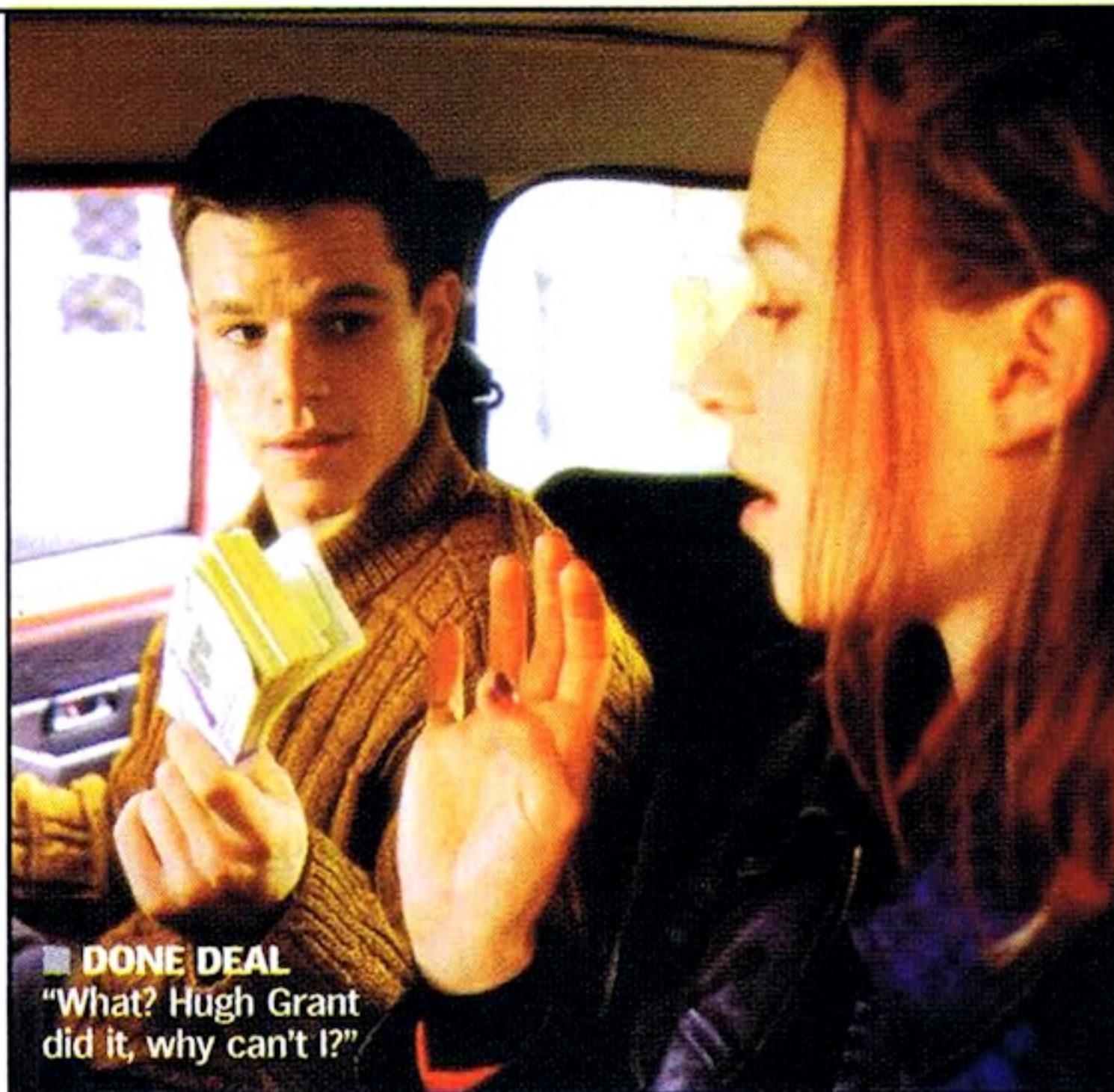
Director Takeshi Mori/Starring Hiroyuki Yoshino, Yumi Kakazu/Distributor Kaleidoscope/Out Now/Price: \$28.95



FILM: Gender relations are taken to extremes in this hilarious space-based comedy, where the men and women who fled Earth eons ago are now waging a bitter war against each other. They live on separate planets, procreate via test tubes, eat genetically engineered pellets, and are so intellectually disconnected from each other that the men are convinced the women are out to eat their innards. This CG-laden show brings events to a head when a common alien enemy turns a small band of men and women into unlikely allies, paving the way for some great mecha battles. **7/10**

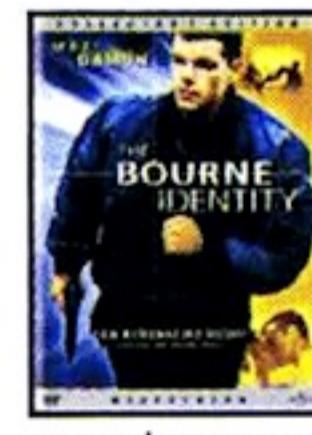
EXTRAS: Basic language and subtitling options **2/10**

VERDICT: A little clichéd, but the action and ensemble cast are fun to watch. □ SA



The Bourne Identity

Director Doug Liman/Starring Matt Damon, Franka Potente, Chris Cooper, Clive Owen, Brian Cox/Distributor Universal/Out May/Price TBA



FILM: Plucked from the Atlantic by a fishing trawler, bullet-riddled amnesiac Matt Damon must find out who he is and why the authorities want him dead. On the run across Europe with crack assassins on his trail, Damon is revealed as CIA super-soldier Jason Bourne and his skills are put to the test in a series of spectacular shoot-outs, car chases and martial arts melees. A breakneck thriller with plot twists and action galore, this is cracking entertainment. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Director Doug Liman's commentary reveals that he included material from his father's memoirs in the film (his Dad was involved in the Iran Contra affair). The deleted scenes and featurette with cast and crew interviews are fairly dull. **5/10**

VERDICT: Clichéd but thoroughly enjoyable action thriller. □ LH



DVDS YOU MUST OWN THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT

Criminally overlooked as a vanity project for wife Geena Davis, Renny Harlin's B-movie action fest not only boasts great set-pieces but also one of the sharpest, laugh-out-loud scripts in kaboom-buster history. Throw in a vintage Sam L Jackson as a low-rent private dick and this is a certified keeper.

PS2 EGGSTRA

Hidden DVD treasures for your pleasure.



TOMB RAIDER

WHAT'S IN STORE? An interview clip with father and daughter thespians Jon Voight and Angelina Jolie, talking about how much fun the pair had working together on the movie. Make the most of it, though, because the two are apparently no longer speaking.

WHERE IS IT? Go to the Special Features menu, highlight Main Menu and then press down until you come to a 'wave' symbol. Just select it to view the extra.

SEND US YOUR EASTER EGGS

Spotted a DVD bonus? Then drop us a line at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au and let us know where and how you found it.

postal

This month we talk about confusing life with PlayStation 2, game demos and cheating online.

THE LETTERS ARE FLOODING IN NOW SO KEEP THEM COMING! IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OR SAY, WRITE TO US AT OPS2 · DERWENT HOWARD COM AU OR SEND SNAIL MAIL TO OPS2, DERWENT HOWARD PTY LTD, PO BOX 1037, BONDI JUNCTION, NSW 1355. THE WINNER OF THE STAR LETTER EACH ISSUE GETS A GAME – A GOOD GAME – OF OUR CHOOSING. JUST REMEMBER, WE WANT INTELLIGENT, INFORMED LETTERS THAT DON'T ALL TALK ABOUT THE SAME THING. NO FLAMING, NO 'MY CONSOLE'S BETTER THAN YOURS' STUFF. NO 'WHEN IS GAME XXX OUT?' ETC. AND FOR MERCY'S SAKE, USE THE SPELLCHECKER IF YOU SEND YOUR LETTER BY EMAIL – THEN WE MIGHT, TOO, WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRUNCATE, HACK AND SLASH YOUR LETTER SEEMINGLY AT RANDOM.



STAR LETTER

GAME OF LIFE

You know those David Cronenberg films in which the boundaries between electronic entertainment and actual reality are blurred, and you just get confused and ask for your money back? Well, on the way back from the pub one evening my mate complained about his feet. "No problem," I thought to myself, "I'll just steal a car – oh... wait..." Now, that was just a split second brain fart, but for that split second I thought stealing cars was an okay thing to do!

But that's not the end of it. I was walking through town a few days later when someone came out of an alleyway behind me. What did I do? I only tried to turn my head around by pressing R3! Then, the other

day I tried to pause my food so it wouldn't go cold while I got a drink. Pause my food! What the hell? Does anyone else suffer this kind of thing? Try to lock on to a passer-by with a quick hold of L1?

Is this just a quirk of everyday life, like when you switch the light on when you leave the room, thinking it was already on? Or is it something more sinister?

Dan Murtha, via email

What about watching a football match on telly and mentally thinking Circle button to bring the keeper out? Or wondering where the Triangle button is instead of looking in your rear view mirror? No, neither have we. You need a psychiatrist, Dan, and fast. You complete freak.

I FEEL THE NEED The need to steal a bike and kill pedestrians!



JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH

I play your monthly demos regularly – sometimes too much – but I can't help thinking how limited some of the demos are. I know these are just tasters of the real games but do any of the demos have extras? For example, rumour is that your *Getaway* demo features a secret 'free roaming' code...

Steven Cheng, via email

As much as we would like to dictate the content of our demos, ultimately the game developer or publisher decides how much of their game you get to play for free. Ideally, they want to give you enough to get you excited, but not so much that

you don't feel the need to buy the game. Which is fair enough really. With 10 playable demos on the disc, you still get plenty of free playtime. The secret 'free roaming' code on The Getaway demo sounds like another great gaming myth, unless someone can enlighten us. But at least it's more feasible than the Vice City money printer mentioned last month...

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

Like many other kids, I own many PS2 games with a 15+ rating on it, yet I am only 12. What is the point of having age restrictions on games when probably less than half of the people who own games like

GTA are actually over the age limit? And if these games are genuinely made for adults, why are they advertised in mags and during TV shows that are aimed at kids?

Dan Taylor, via email

Vice City clearly isn't aimed at 12-year-olds, otherwise it wouldn't cultivate nostalgia for a decade that finished before you were even born, Dan. Nor is our mag aimed solely at kids – note the fact that we use phrases like 'cultivate nostalgia'. However, no one can do anything if an indulgent parent is happy to buy mature games for you. Let's just hope you don't grow up to be a sociopathic, gun-fixated maniac!

CHEATS NEVER PROSPER

I was just wondering about online games and cheats. I use cheats as much as the next guy and, in many cases, they have saved me. I am also a big fan of PS2 games going online. However, if you were to team up with people online while playing FFXI for example, you simply wouldn't be able to use cheats. Likewise for football games – if you teamed up with other people, you couldn't use goal-scoring cheats. I feel that many people will be put off by this fact. Will cheats become a thing of the past?

Paul Chapman, via email

Surely using cheats in any kind of multiplayer game totally cheapens the experience? Where's the glory in beating someone when you've given yourself a totally unfair advantage?

UNITED STATES OF WHATEVER

I have just come back from studying in the States. One thing that surprised me when I arrived back in Oz was Sony's distinct lack of interest in the public. Okay, we get the odd ad on TV, but that's nothing compared to the publicity generated by games companies in America. It's almost impossible to ignore some games when they come out over there. Whereas over here, many great games don't get the publicity they deserve and go unnoticed by the general public. I know you guys at OPS2 review every game, but not all PS2 owners buy games magazines. Please tell me why Sony seems to take more interest in the US than it does here?

Ben, via email

This isn't something we've ever noticed. Surely, before Christmas, *The Getaway* and *Vice City* were everywhere? However, we do have more of a magazine culture, meaning that games companies can target a decent percentage of their

potential audience through big-selling magazines such as OPS2. American game advertisers may need to spend more on mainstream advertising in order to reach the same percentage of potential buyers.

GLOOM RAIDER

Am I the only person who isn't bothered about the new *Tomb Raider* game? It's a formula that no longer works. Take Lara, for example. Years ago, it was groundbreaking to have a female lead character, but now she's just one of the most boring characters in gaming history. Compare her to other female characters. Jen from *Primal* can transform into a demon, Lucia from *DMC2* can change into a devil. But Lara is an archaeologist. How exciting is that? An archaeologist. Woo hoo.

Characters in games are looking more and more real, but Lara looks weird due to her impossible proportions. *Tomb Raider*'s new graphics don't exactly look groundbreaking either. Then there's the storylines. They are sooo boring. They always involve some stupid ancient race or some daft prophecy. They just aren't interesting. The gameplay is always the same run, jump, pull lever, etc. The only new thing in each game is a different action that Lara can show off. Wow.

The first two games were okay, but the rest were awful. After five near-identical games I think Lara is best left in the past.

Chris Bamford, via email

Okay, now you've got your tirade against *Tomb Raider: Chronicles* out of the way, why not turn to page 26 to see why *The Angel Of Darkness* is going to be a very different story. And maybe wait until you've played it before getting on that high horse?

I'M A CELEBRITY...

GET ME A GAME ENDORSEMENT

OUR JUMPING ON THE BRANDWAGON FEATURE FUELLED QUITE A RESPONSE. HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE CELEBRITY GAME BUNCH:

STALLONE IN THE DARK

Sly is haunted by his dire acting in *Judge Dredd* and the painful *Get Carter* remake.

Daniel Truss, via email

OSCAR WILDE WILD RACING

Off-the-wall driving chaos mixed with serious poetry.

Steve Terry, via email

SIMPLY RED FACTION

A whole army of Mick Hucknalls! On second thoughts...

Ben Collins, via email

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Magazine Australia

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24 Hour Party People

Revenge of
the n*^ee*^rD*^s
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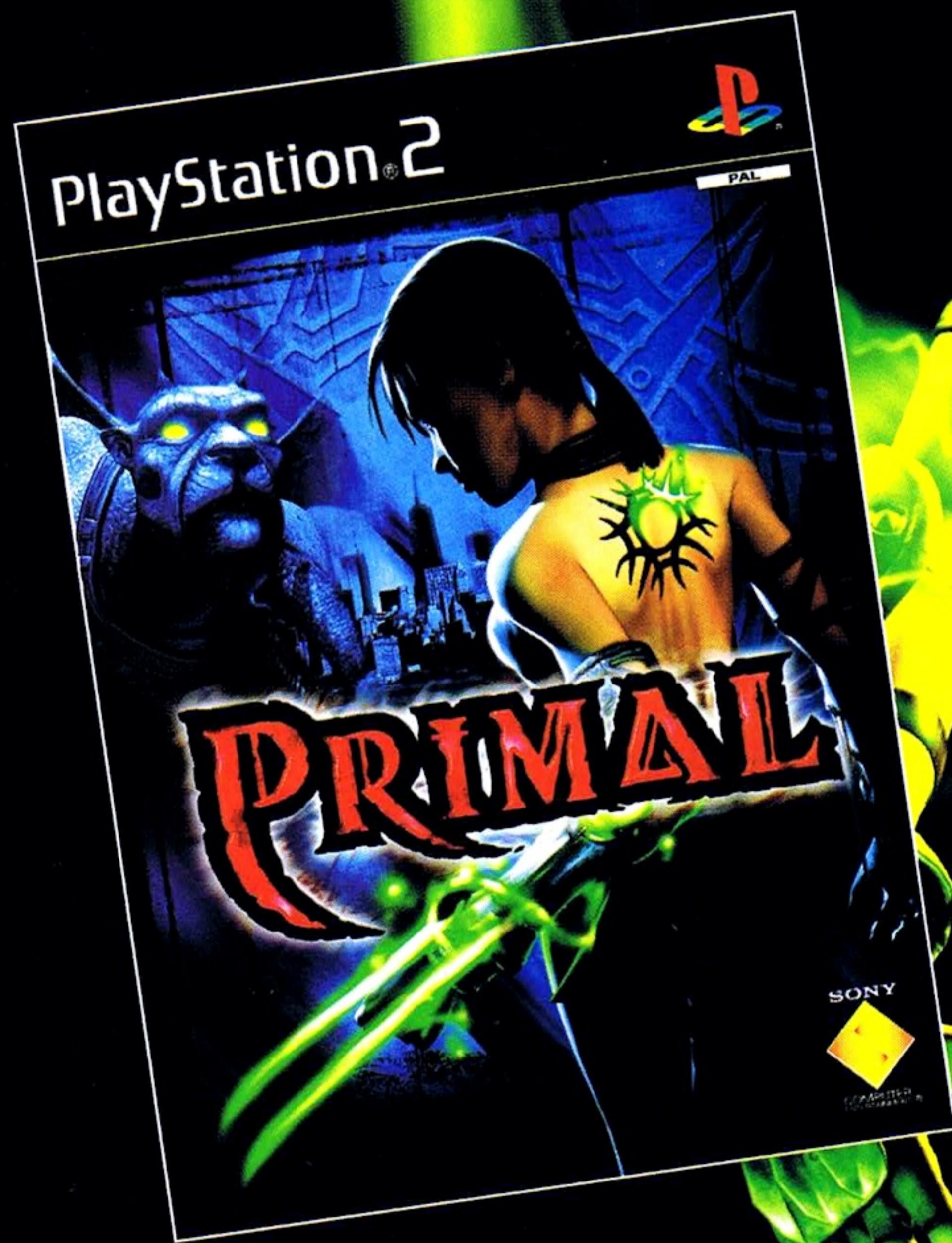
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MINISTRY
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HARDCORE

Tips, tricks, cheats and challenges courtesy of Official Tips Mag!



Good afternoon Mr Player. Young here, Richie Young, ready to soothe all your 007 woes with this complete guide to Bond Moves and 007 Bonus Item locations. We've also got a Vice City map with all those hidden packages highlighted.

R. Young

Richie Young, Official Tips Guru

IN HARDCORE THIS MONTH

084	JAMES BOND: 007 NIGHTFIRE	GUIDE
089	GTA: VICE CITY	MAP
090	STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS	TIPS
090	STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	TIPS
090	MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE	TIPS
090	TIGER WOODS USA TOUR 2002	TIPS
090	TREASURE PLANET	TIPS
090	LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2	TIPS

YOU WANT MORE?
There's a whole magazine of tips on the shelves now!

GUIDE

JAMES BOND: 007 NIGHTFIRE

Put on your tux, pick up your licence to kill and grab your gun. Official Tips Magazine shows you all Bond's moves and the whereabouts of all those 007 Bonus Icons.

BEFORE YOU START...



■ MONEY PENNY? Out of the club, Bond's date didn't look quite the fox she had earlier.

PERFORMING BOND MOVES

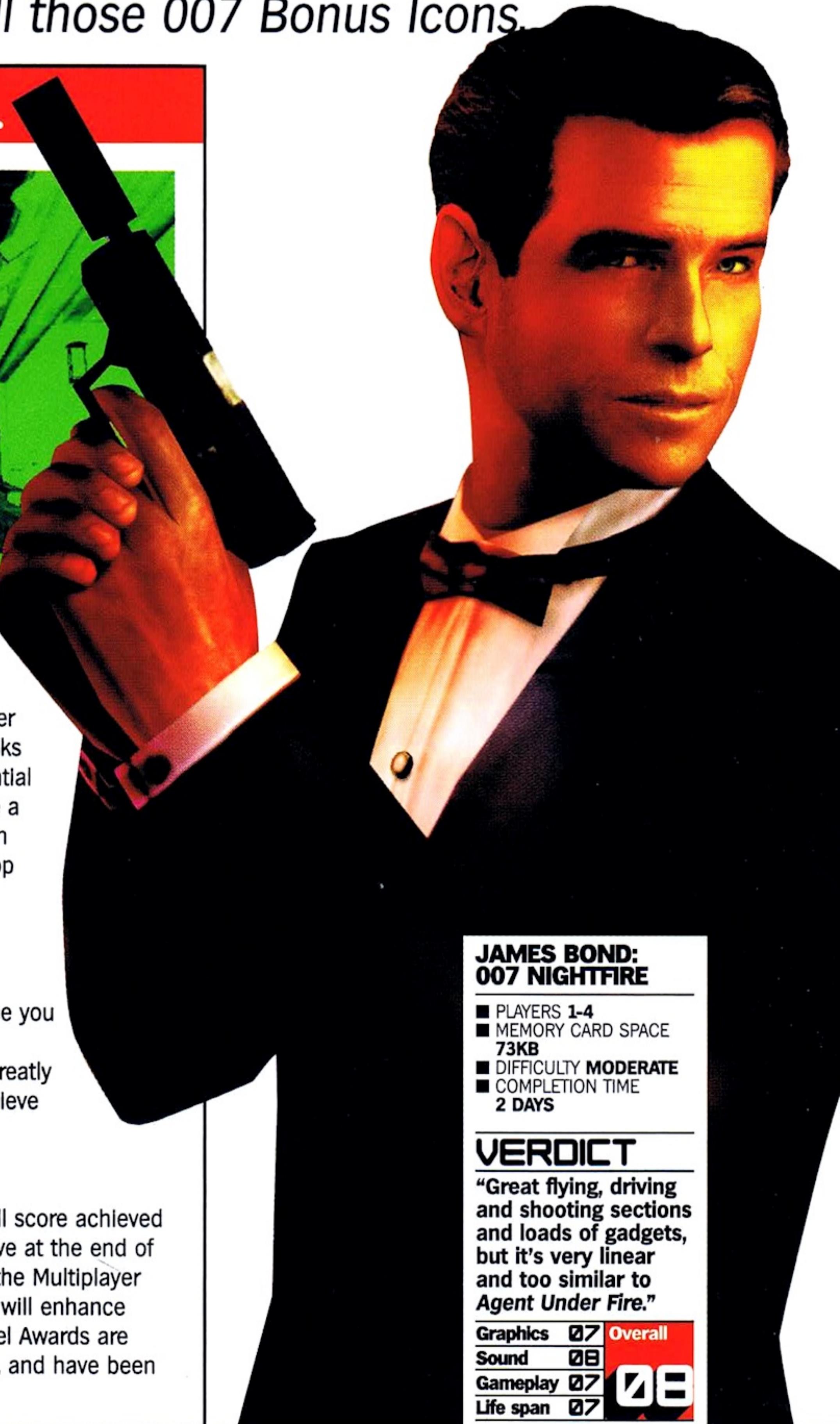
Apart from the mission objectives you'll need to complete within each level, there are also various tasks that must be performed in a certain way in order to be rewarded with a Bond Move. Although these tasks are not critical to completing the level, they are essential if you wish to increase your overall score and achieve a Gold Medal ranking. Each time a Bond Move has been successfully completed, a 007 Icon will flash at the top of the screen.

GETTING THE 007 BONUS ICONS

Each mission has various 007 Bonus Icons that are scattered through the level, but are only available once you have already completed that level with a Gold Medal ranking. Collecting all the 007 Bonus Icons will also greatly improve your overall score and is the only way to achieve that top Platinum Medal ranking.

LEVEL AWARDS

How well you performed during a level and the overall score achieved will determine the Medal and Level Award you'll receive at the end of that level. The majority of these awards are skins for the Multiplayer mode of the game, although some are upgrades that will enhance weapons and gadgets in Single-player mode. The Level Awards are awarded for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum Medals, and have been detailed for each and every mission.



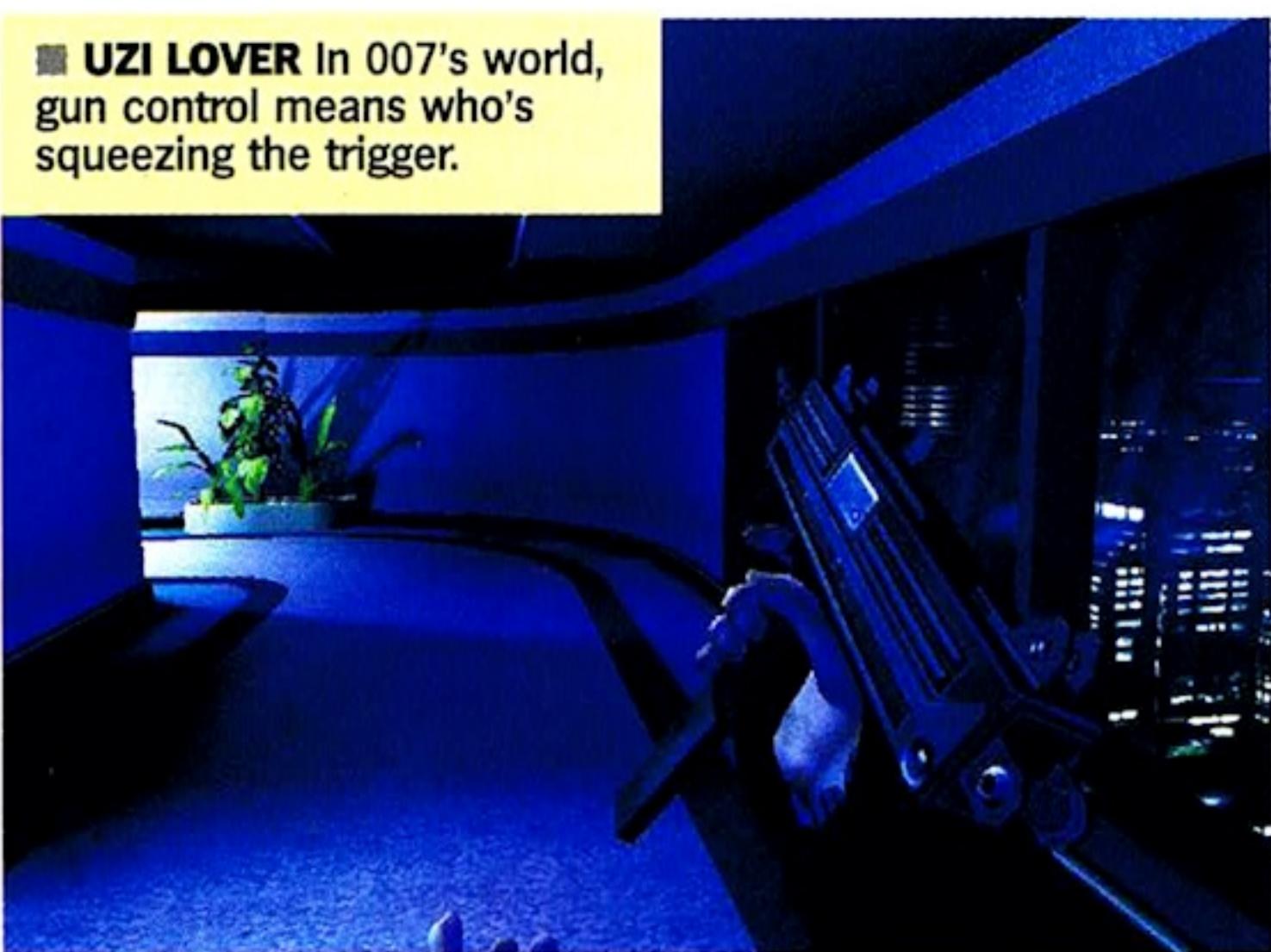
JAMES BOND: 007 NIGHTFIRE

■ PLAYERS 1-4
■ MEMORY CARD SPACE 73KB
■ DIFFICULTY MODERATE
■ COMPLETION TIME 2 DAYS

VERDICT

"Great flying, driving and shooting sections and loads of gadgets, but it's very linear and too similar to Agent Under Fire."

Graphics	07	Overall
Sound	08	
Gameplay	07	08
Life span	07	



MISSION 1 PARIS PRELUDE

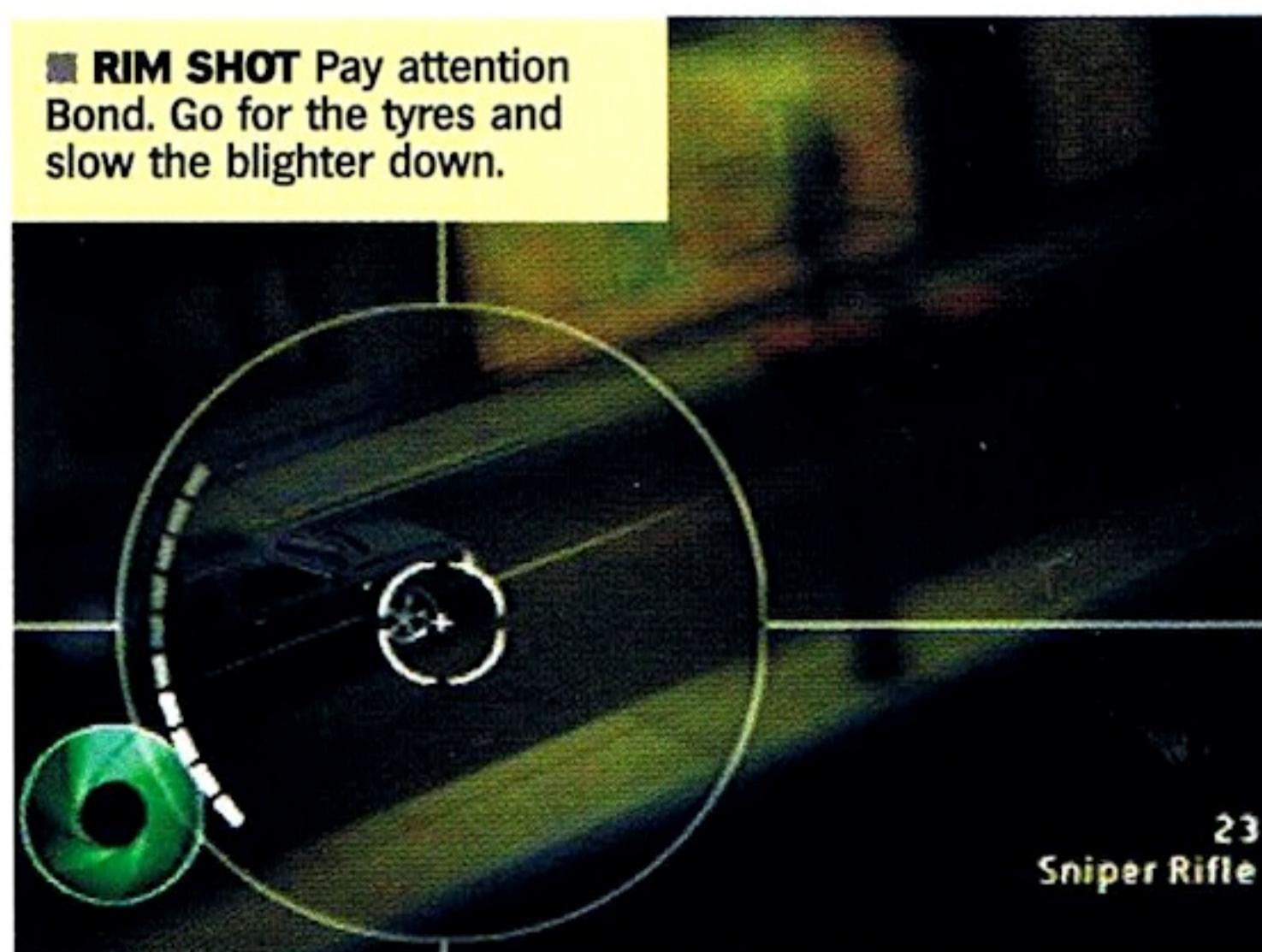
BOND MOVES



1. At the very start of this mission, use the Sniper Rifle to target and shoot out a tyre of either enemy car that's chasing Dominique through the streets of Paris.
2. After passing over the first bridge, target and shoot out a tyre of the lead car that joins in the pursuit. Try to do this before the car enters the tunnel section to make things easier...
3. Target and shoot out the tyre of the second enemy car that's chasing Dominique after passing over the first bridge.
4. After passing over the rooftops in the helicopter, Dominique will be heading straight towards you. Target and shoot out the front tyre of the enemy car that's in pursuit.
5. Once inside the Vanquish on the second stage of this mission, use the Q-Smoke device as soon as it comes online to lose the two enemy cars directly behind.
6. When approaching the two enemy cars that block your path at the end of the narrow alleyway, use the Q-Wedge as soon as it comes online, then successfully guide the Vanquish through the gap between the cars.
7. When approaching the bridge towards the end of the second stage of the mission, use the Q-Boost to make it safely across to the other side of the river.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. Once in control of the Vanquish, the first 007 Bonus Icon is located on the outside of the first right-hand bend. Mount the pavement to collect it.
2. As you drive behind the moving van that blocks your path, quickly turn to the left. The 007 Bonus icon can be found directly behind the van on the left-hand side of the street next to some benches.
3. This 007 Bonus icon is located on the route you'll take



23 Sniper Rifle

while chasing the van through the park. It's up high and can be collected by using the stairs as a jump.

4. After using the Q-Boost to jump the river you will then need to follow the road to the right. Get ready to mount the pavement on the left where the fourth and final 007 Bonus Icon is located.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Dominique
- **Silver:** Skin, Jaws
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Racing Missile
- **Platinum:** Skin, Renard

MISSION 2 THE EXCHANGE

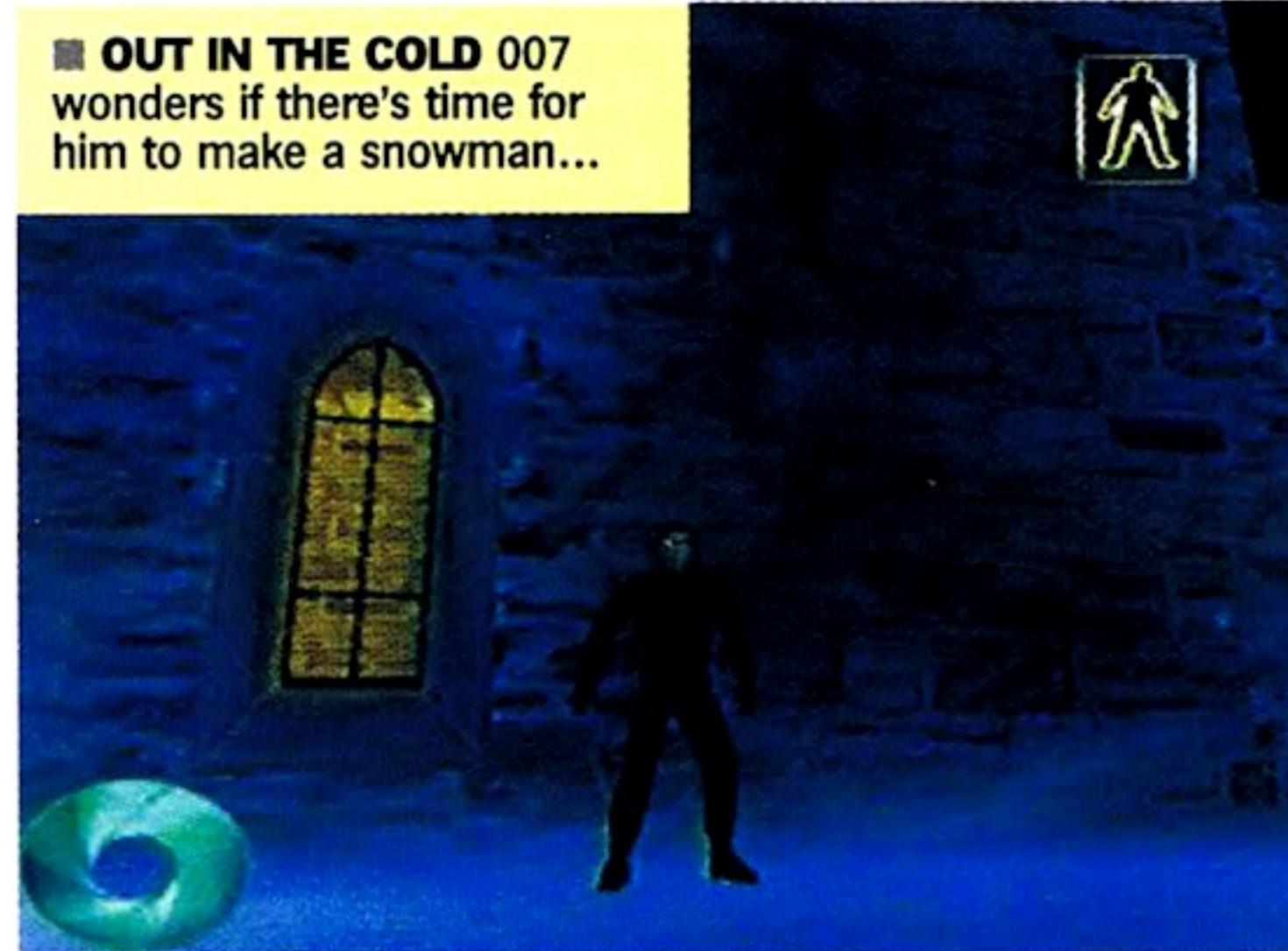
BOND MOVES



1. This first Bond Move is achieved by jumping down from the starting point into the back of the truck as it passes below. Now crouch down until the truck enters the castle. If you choose to use this route you will not be able to achieve the second Bond Move, and vice versa.

2. Should you decide not to jump into the back of the truck from the start, you will receive a Bond Move for choosing the long route and making it past the three castle windows without being detected by the guards inside. Hard man!

■ **OUT IN THE COLD** 007 wonders if there's time for him to make a snowman...



3. Before making your way into the party, search the castle and locate the fuse box for the search lights then use your Laser to cut the green wire and disable the search lights.

4. After the exchange between Mayhew and Drake, head out through the window then eliminate the guards before using the zip line to earn another Bond Move.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. From the start, head back in the direction the truck comes from. Target and remove the lone guard then proceed to the end of the road to locate the 007 Bonus Icon.
2. Exit the building at the start then turn right to walk along the side of the wall to reach the snowy pathway below. The 007 Bonus Icon is out in the open next to a crate.
3. Enter the castle using the long route (not the truck), then once through the crack in the wall head through the door and deal with the guard who appears from the next door. Now proceed to the end of the rampart to collect the 007 Bonus Icon.
4. Venture into the wine cellar near where the truck stops inside the castle, then dispatch the guards inside before collecting the 007 Bonus icon that's behind the three small barrels.

5. After meeting Dominique in the library, collect the body armour from the table then walk to the far end of the room to claim the 007 Bonus Icon before venturing through the nearby door.

6. On exiting the Library you'll have to fight your way through various guards before being able to witness the exchange between Mayhew and Drake. Before entering the final door, continue along the hallway and down the stairs to the fireplace to find the 007 Bonus Icon.

7. Once you've witnessed the exchange between Mayhew and Drake, exit through the window then turn to the right where the 007 Bonus Icon is waiting for the taking.

8. Once inside the gondola station, use the metal stairs to reach the room below where the 007 Bonus Icon is located, but watch out for the numerous guards. Grab the body armour from the crate if required.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Zoe
- **Silver:** Skin, Oddjob
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Pistol
- **Platinum:** Skin, Baron Samedi

MISSION 3 ALPINE ESCAPE

BOND MOVES



1. While waiting for Night Shade to start the snowmobile, target and shoot the green light above the gondola as it comes into view. When it falls you'll be rewarded with a Bond Move.

2. While still waiting for agent Night Shade to start the snowmobile, target and shoot the small green light on the large fuel tank, but only when the two guards have emerged from behind it and are completely visible to you.

3. Once on the move, turn to the front of the snowmobile and remove the first few guards then target the fuel barrels below the wooden watch tower to remove the nearby guards and perform another Bond Move.

4. After dispatching the three guards who give chase on the snowmobiles, turn to the front and shoot-out the grate on the tunnel entrance that goes under the road.

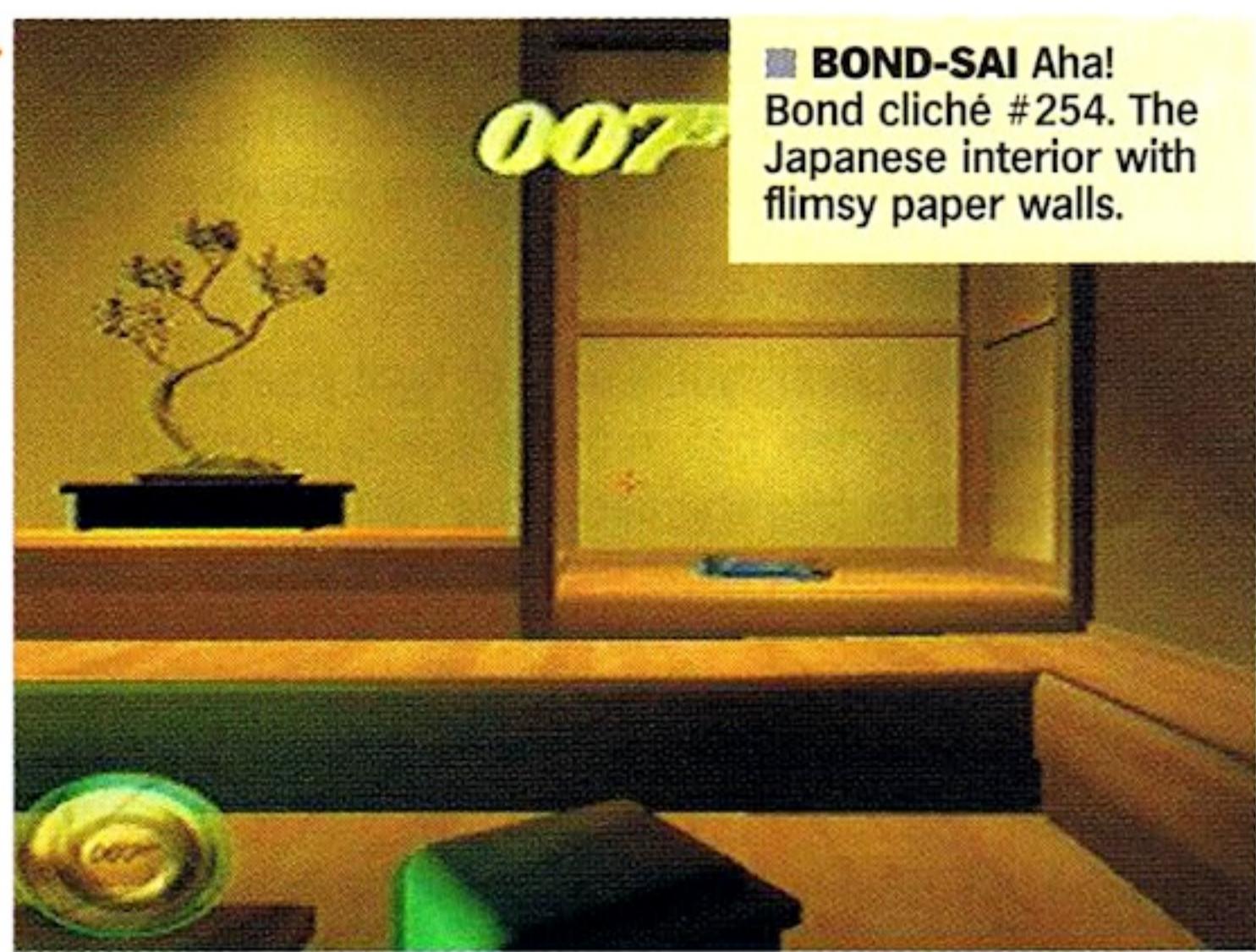
5. As you head back onto the road for a second time you'll approach a gate that's heavily guarded. Shoot the small green light to the left before the gate closes.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. Once on the move, take out the first two guards in front of you, then target the barrels in front of the building to the right to expose a 007 Bonus Icon.
2. After emerging from the tunnel below the road, you'll be confronted with a head-to-head snowmobile challenge. Target and dispatch the oncoming guard to expose another 007 Bonus Icon.

■ **ICE TO MEET YOU** Just 'cos it's 15 below, doesn't mean there aren't fireworks.





BOND-SAI Aha!
Bond cliché #254. The Japanese interior with flimsy paper walls.

3. When approaching the heavily guarded gate, target and remove the two rocket-launching guards positioned on top and the guard directly below, and the 007 Bonus icon is yours.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Military Snowmobile
- **Silver:** Scenario, Assassination
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Grapple
- **Platinum:** Skin, Zorin

MISSION 4 ENEMIES VANQUISHED

BOND MOVES



1. When you approach the first left-hand bend, use the Q-Smoke on the police car positioned behind the billboard when it gives chase and collect your first Bond Move.

2. As you exit the built-up area of houses, the road leads to the left. Keep going straight on and up the stairs directly in front to jump over a courtyard and land in the town square. Now use your machine guns to blast a path through the cafe and back onto the street.

3. After leaving the town, you'll have more enemy cars to contend with (well, no-one said it was going to be easy). After a short while you hear police sirens behind you. Use the Q-Smoke to lose them and achieve another Bond Move.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. While driving through the built-up area, you'll pass under a banner across the road – after this the road bends right. Keep to the outside of the bend and drive onto the small area with chairs and benches. You'll find the first 007 Bonus icon can be found.

2. After using the stairs for the second Bond Move, you'll land in the town square. The second 007 Bonus icon is located directly in front of the cafe you must blast your way through.

3. After jumping across the bridge and ravine, you'll soon approach another jump that leads onto the first part of the frozen land. Make sure you keep to the middle as you approach. The 007 Bonus icon is waiting for you as you take-off from the jump.

4. While making your way across the frozen lake and dealing with the enemy snowmobiles, venture left and around to the back of the small island to locate the fourth 007 Bonus icon.



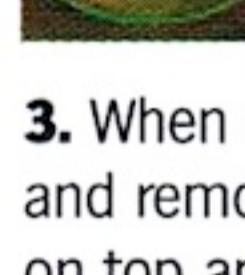
5. After reaching the large frozen lake where you'll be pursued by helicopters and snowmobiles, turn to the left and head around the island and collect another 007 Bonus icon.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Vanquish
- **Silver:** Skin, Scaramanga
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Micro Camera Scope
- **Platinum:** Skin, May Day

MISSION 5 DOUBLE CROSS

BOND MOVES



1. When you emerge in the first outdoor section, sneak into the water then swim under the bridge where a guard is positioned. From underneath the bridge, target and remove the guard for a Bond Move.

2. From the first outdoor area, locate and enter the underwater tunnel that runs below the main building then use the ladder to climb past the grate and enter the room above. Now target and kill the guards holding the hostage.

3. On reaching the second outdoor area, dispatch the surrounding guards, then locate the line with lanterns suspended from it. Target and shoot the lanterns then jump onto the rock and swing across to the building.

4. After destroying Mayhew's computer, move into the next room and remove the guards, then head through the door on the right and target the guards who are holding a hostage in the kitchen.

5. Once you've collected the key code from the dragon safe, head into the room beyond, then equip the thermographic glass to locate the secret door. Head through the door, and the next door also, then quickly deal with the guard holding the hostage under the stairs.

6. When you go out onto the rooftops, approach the skylights, then target and remove the guard below with the hostage.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. After dealing with the three guards at the start, walk to the right of the outside area for the 007 Bonus icon.

SHOT IN THE DARK Well, you never know. That patch of wall might be dangerous.

2. Before Mayhew leads you into the bunker, you will need to dispatch the guard on the floor above. Once he's been dealt with move to his location to claim the 007 Bonus icon.

3. As you reach the first main outside area, remove the surrounding guards and approach the hut with the gong to collect the third 007 Bonus icon.

4. On reaching the second outside area and rescuing the first hostage, follow the walkway around to the right. The 007 Bonus icon will be waiting for you.

5. After dealing with the guards in the kitchen and saving the second hostage, you must enter the dining room area and look behind the screen to discover the next 007 Bonus icon.

6. Once you've rescued the third hostage, head out onto the rooftop to deal with the sniper, then move along the wooden beam to the next balcony where the 007 Bonus icon is waiting.

7. When you enter the final building via the skylight, secure the area then search the four small rooms in order to locate the cleaning room. The final 007 Bonus icon will be in this room.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Mayhew Servant Girl
- **Silver:** Scenario, Uplink
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Rifle
- **Platinum:** Skin, Xenia Onatopp

ORDERLY Q With Q branch on your side you'll never be short of nifty gadgets.



MISSION 6 NIGHT SHIFT

BOND MOVES

1. After installing the Q-Worm, enter the janitor's room opposite. Open the vent in the ceiling, then use the Grapple to climb into the shaft. Move through the shaft and open the next vent to enter the room below.

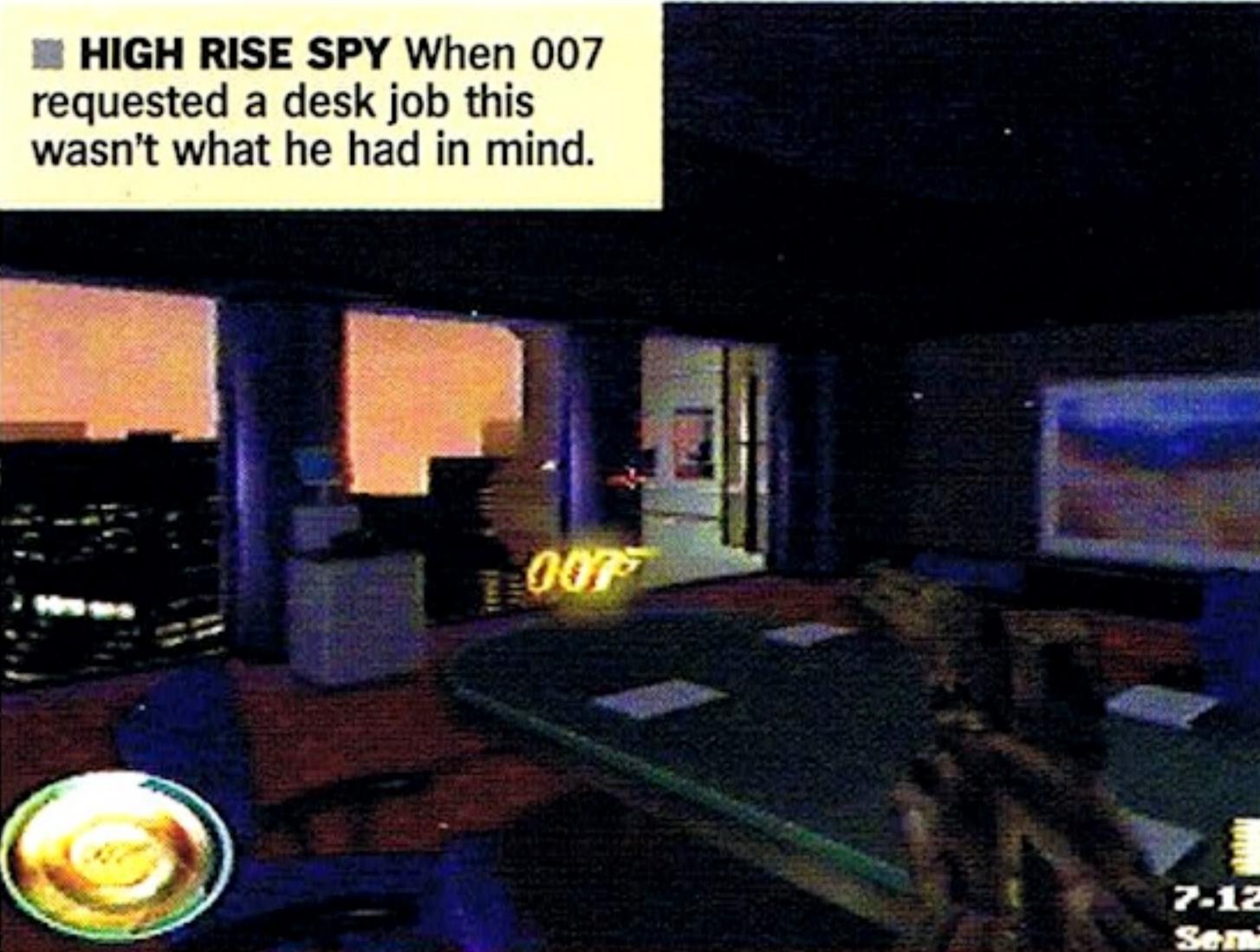
2. Make it successfully into the Security Terminal room (after using the Q-Worm on Mayhew's computer) without coming into contact with any of the security lasers.

3. Once on the rooftop of the Phoenix International Headquarters, remove the nearby guards, then equip the AT-600 and use it to take down the helicopter.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. In the car park at the very start of the mission, wait for the guard to walk away, then head to the left and around the corner for the first 007 Bonus icon.

2. After using the first elevator to reach the main entrance of the Phoenix International Headquarters, make your way to the main door in front of the reception desk to claim the 007 Bonus icon.



3. After using the second elevator to reach the offices on the floor above, exit and proceed into the corridor and head left. Take the next left and continue along the walkway to the end for the 007 Bonus icon.

4. Once you're on the first floor, move through the corridors and locate office 70-C. Cautiously venture inside and search around all the desks for the 007 Bonus icon.

5. Once you've used the decryptor to venture into the second set of corridors, continue to the end of the dark corridor for the 007 Bonus icon.

6. After using the roof of the external elevator to reach the vent shaft, exit the following room and enter the boardroom. The 007 Bonus icon can be found here.

7. Once on the rooftop of the Phoenix International Headquarters, deal with the surrounding guards, then move to the far corner where the 007 Bonus icon will be waiting.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Kiko
- **Silver:** Scenario, Team KOH
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Pistol
- **Platinum:** Skin, Christmas Jones

MISSION 7 CHAIN REACTION



BOND MOVES

1. From the roof of the first building, deal with the snipers, then approach the further vent hatch and use your laser to remove the four hinges of the grate. Now you can enter the shaft to reach the room below.

2. Once outside, climb onto the forklift that's moving back and forth, then use the grapple to reach the small platform on the side of the long building. Now jump down to the lower platform to grab the ammo.

3. In the final building, use the control panel to activate the crane beam. Now stand on the stairs and use the grapple to get onto the beam when it's at its closest.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. After you've secured the first building and taken a photo of the jetpack prototype, use the upper walkway to drop down onto the forklift where the first 007 Bonus icon is positioned.

2. Enter the open hangar and use the grapple to reach the walkway above, then jump across to the container situated in the middle. Use your laser to remove the vent by the fan, then drop in for the 007 Bonus icon.

3. Before using the last wire to swing across to the entrance of the TR-2 building, use the grapple to get to the roof. Use your zip line in order to reach the hangar. The 007 Bonus icon will be on the walkway.

4. Once inside the TR-2 building, secure the area, then look behind the generator on the ground level – where the 007 Bonus icon is waiting for the taking.

5. Once in the second outside area, remove the surrounding snipers, then swing across to the crane and press the button to make it swing to the left. Now jump onto the narrow ledge and head up the ladder to the rooftop. Use the pipe to reach the next ledge then shuffle along to the broken window and enter for the 007 Bonus icon.

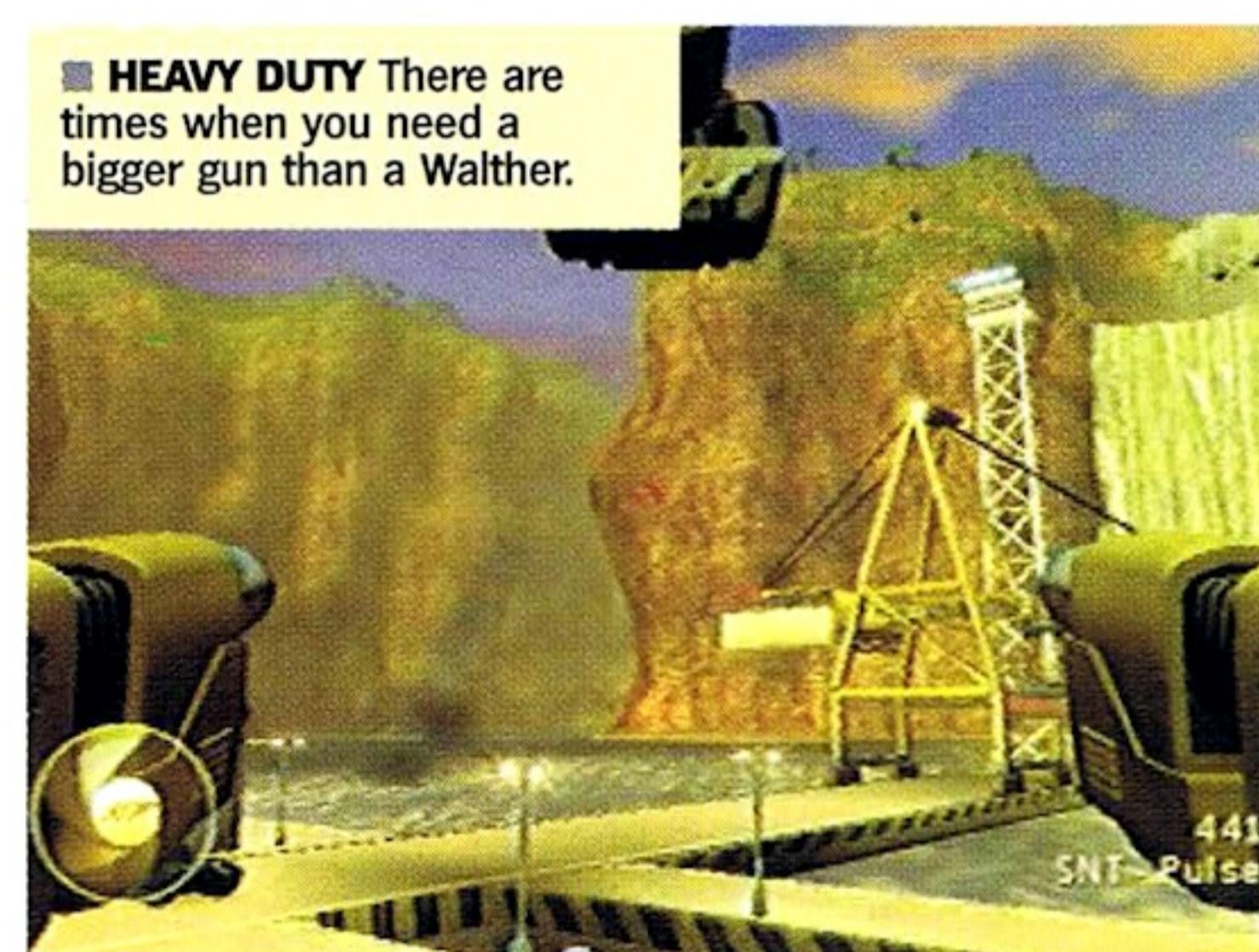
6. Once inside the final building, secure the area and use the control panel to activate the crane beam so that it moves back and forth. Now use the grapple to get onto the crane beam and make your way along the right support to collect the 007 Bonus icon.

7. In the final building, enter the small room to the right of the C5 door. Secure the room and jump onto the crates, then jump across to the shelf with the boxes to claim the 007 Bonus icon.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Rook
- **Silver:** Skin, Wai Lin
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Dart Gun
- **Platinum:** Skin, Goldfinger

■ **HEAVY DUTY** There are times when you need a bigger gun than a Walther.



MISSION 8 PHOENIX FIRE

BOND MOVES

1. Exit the elevator at the start through the broken window and use the grapple to get onto the top of the elevator. Now enter the vent shaft and continue to the janitor's room for the first Bond Move.

2. After entering the security control room proceed to the skybridge and use the Scorpion to destroy the helicopter.

007 BONUS ICONS

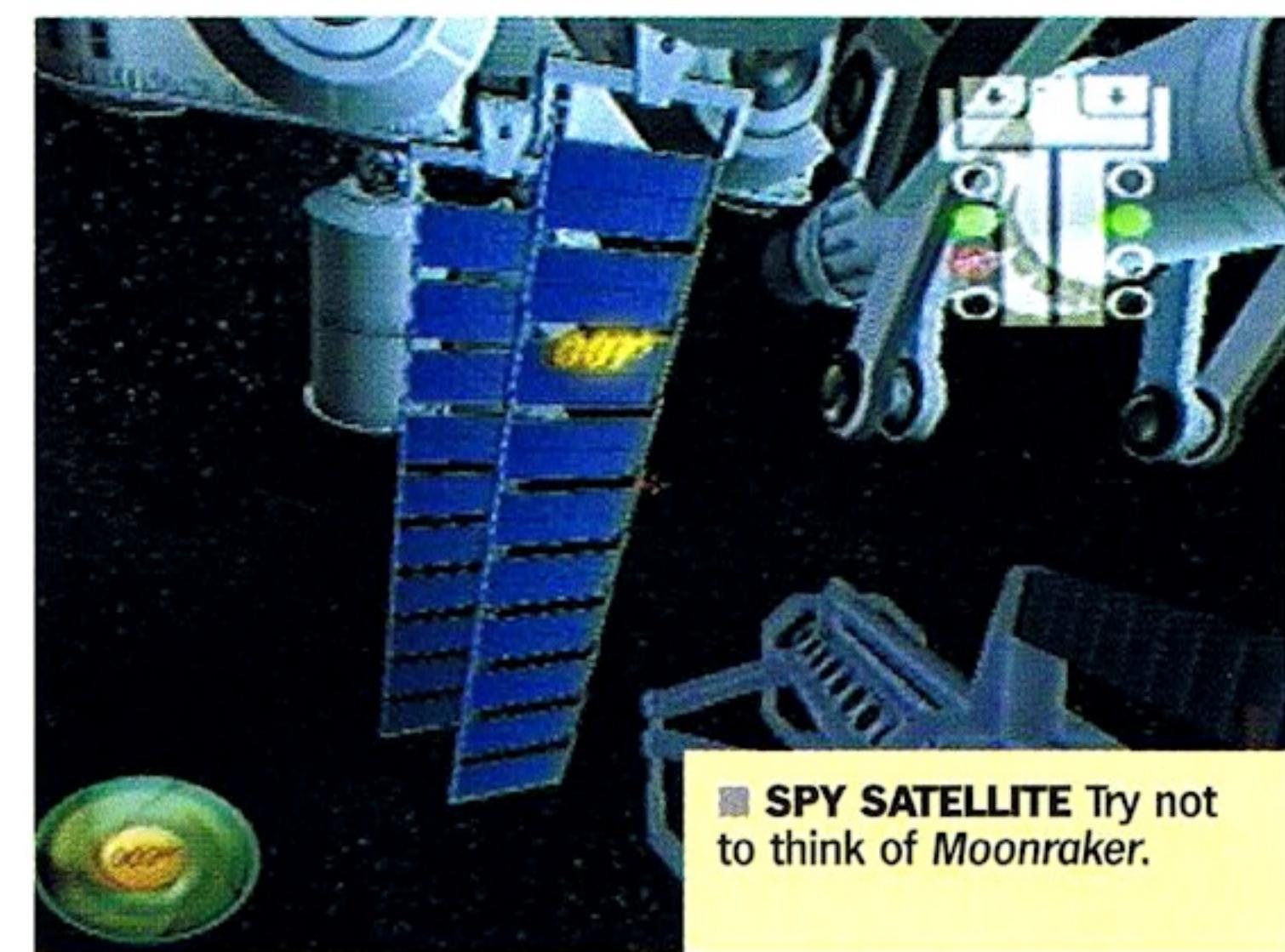
1. Jump through the broken window of the elevator and onto the ledge, then work your way along for the 007 Bonus icon.

2. Exit the elevator, secure the area, then head left and enter the boardroom. In here you will find the 007 Bonus icon.

3. After descending the stairs and entering the office floor, head along the corridor to the left. The 007 Bonus icon is at the end of the walkway.

4. Once past the janitor's room, enter the dining room around the corner to locate the fourth 007 Bonus icon.

5. While making your way around the office floor, enter office 70-A and search the various partitions for the 007 Bonus icon.



6. On reaching the main entrance of the Phoenix International Headquarters, enter the control room for the sixth 007 Bonus icon.

7. This final 007 Bonus icon is in the main reception area of the Phoenix International Headquarters, in front of the main entrance door.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Alura
- **Silver:** Scenario, Demolition
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Pistol
- **Platinum:** Skin, Drake Suit

MISSION 9 DEEP DESCENT

BOND MOVES

1. After turning right into the tunnel inside the sunken ship, launch a Remote Torpedo and guide it through the fan blades to disable the communications node.

2. Once you've destroyed the communications node, head along the side tunnel. Launch a Remote Torpedo and target the tanks below the enemy mini-sub.

3. On entering the cavern – where you must deal with the various enemy mini-subs – quickly target and shoot the gas cylinders to deal with the enemy subs. You will be rewarded with the final Bond Move.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. Soon after entering the sunken ship you'll pass a piece of grating. The 007 Bonus icon is down and to the right.

2. The second 007 Bonus icon will be located at the bottom of the chamber, where the communications node is located.

3. As you approach the second minefield section keep close to the bottom of the cavern to locate the third 007 Bonus icon.

4. While chasing the mini-sub through the next cavern, the 007 Bonus icon is located up high on a ledge to the right. But make sure you don't lose the mini-sub.



■ **FOR TUX SAKE** Bond wonders if he could be her bodyguard...

HARDCORE



SECRET HIDEAWAY?
Thank God villains don't do subtlety.

5. After defeating the enemy mini-subs in the sub dock, ascend to the platform above where the 007 Bonus Icon can be found in plain view.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Vanquish Sub
- **Silver:** Skin, Nik Nak
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Decryptor
- **Platinum:** Skin, Electra King

MISSION 10 ISLAND INFILTRATION

BOND MOVES



1. After following the right-hand fork in the road you'll soon approach the enemy compound. Stop at the gate and wait for it to open to perform the first Bond Move.

2. Before using the access code to open the third security fence, look along the right-hand side of the road for a bush you can drive through to use an alternate route. Keep your speed high to jump the river.

3. While in the aircraft you'll come across a convoy below. Target and destroy the truck while it's on the bridge.

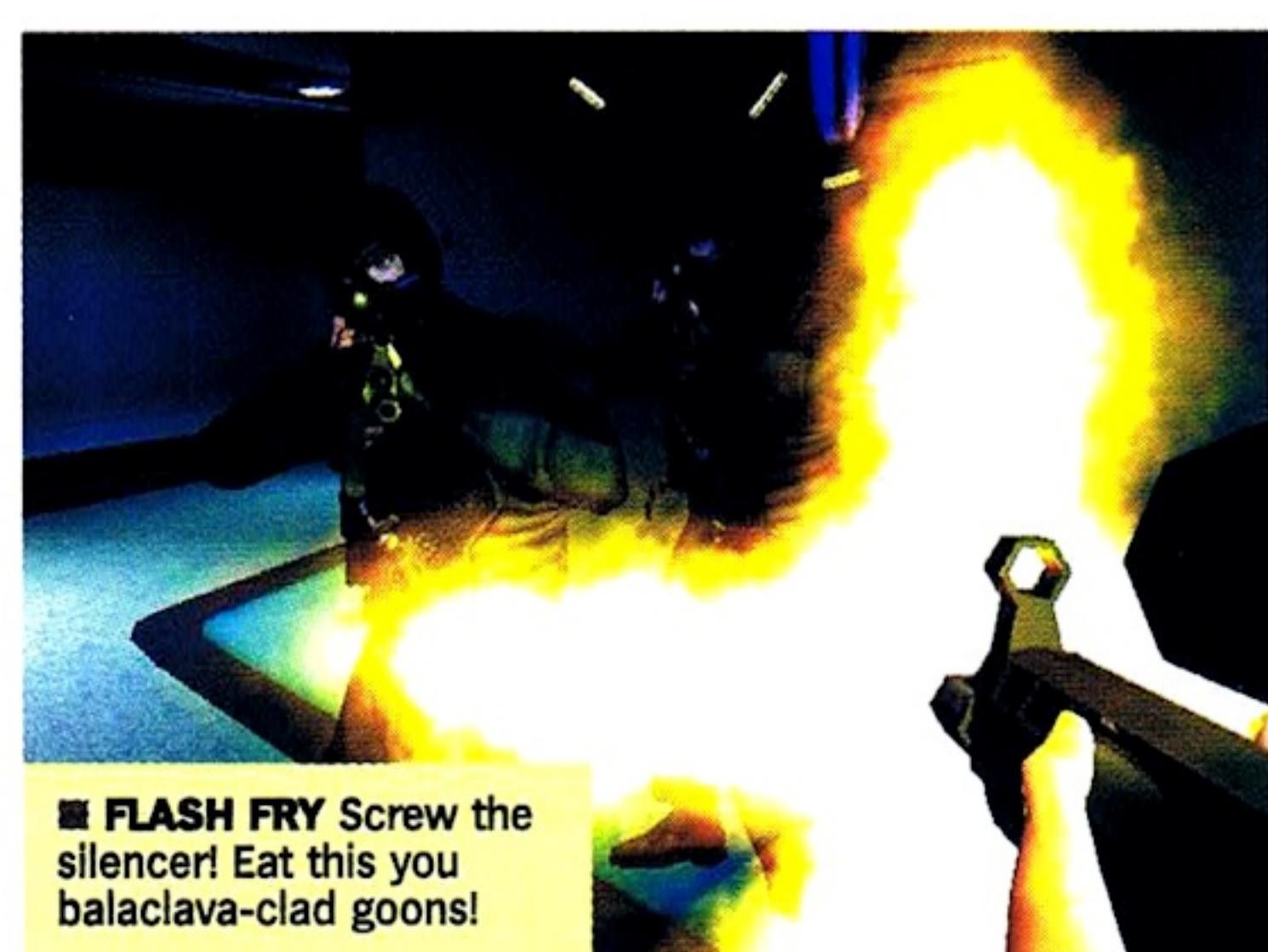
4. Once in control of the surface to air missile battery, target and destroy all the enemy aircraft that approach from the left.

5. Destroy the next set of enemy aircraft that approach from the right.

6. Destroy the enemy aircraft that will approach from directly in front of you.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. Before driving forward in the SUV, hit reverse and back up into the first 007 Bonus Icon.
2. This one's waiting for you on the helipad of the enemy compound. Go get it!
3. After exiting the tunnel where the boulders fall and block the path, destroy the two enemy vehicles and drive to the left to collect the 007 Bonus Icon.



FLASH FRY Screw the silencer! Eat this you balaclava-clad goons!

4. Once inside the aircraft, go past the first bridge, quickly destroy the next Sentinel and fly through the carnage to claim the 007 Bonus Icon.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Ultralight Ultimate Laser
- **Silver:** Scenario, Protection
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Stunner
- **Platinum:** Skin, Bond Tuxedo

MISSION 11 COUNTDOWN

BOND MOVES



1. Disable the alarm system by destroying the circuit boards with your laser in security room A-3, then disable the security cameras by destroying the circuit boards in security room A-4. Now destroy the security safe in room A-8.

2. While venturing through the corridors, use the various fuel barrels scattered throughout the level to deal with nearby guards. Killing enough guards using this method will earn you a Bond Move – so get blasting!



VANQUISHING FOES
Forget beamers. Bond's back in an Aston Martin.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. After destroying the circuit boards in the security room A-4, open the vent grate and enter the shaft to collect the 007 Bonus Icon.
2. Inside the container storage room A-6, look for a small tunnel below the containers. Crawl into the tunnel and proceed to the end for the 007 Bonus Icon.
3. After proceeding through the door to Delta Sector, you'll discover the 007 Bonus Icon as you're making your way through the missile silos. It's in a dead-end section.
4. On reaching the final missile silo, the 007 Bonus Icon is on some crates.
5. Once inside Drake's space shuttle launch facility, enter the side room on the upper level for the 007 Bonus Icon.
6. On entering the shuttle launch silo, quickly walk below the shuttle in front of you to claim the 007 Bonus Icon.
7. On entering the shuttle launch silo, quickly walk below the shuttle to the right and collect the 007 Bonus Icon.

LEVEL AWARDS

- **Bronze:** Card, Drake
- **Silver:** Mode, Explosive Scenario
- **Gold:** Upgrade, Laser
- **Platinum:** Skin, Pussy Galore



GAS ATTACK
"Okay, who was it? I won't ask again."

MISSION 12 EQUINOX

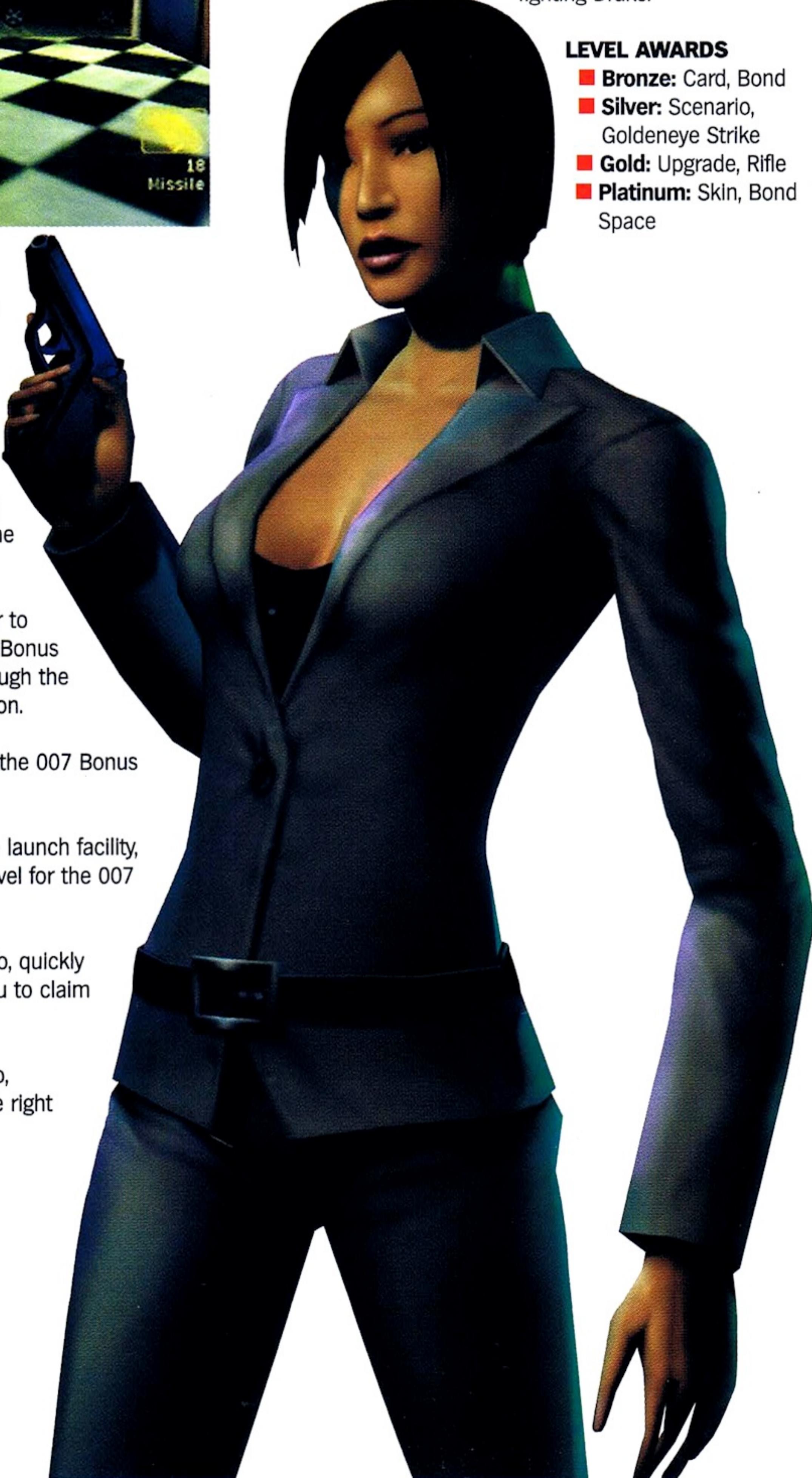
BOND MOVES



There are no Bond Moves to perform on this final level.

007 BONUS ICONS

1. The first 007 Bonus Icon is located in the middle of the laser projector.
- 2-7. The remaining six 007 Bonus Icons are positioned around the outside of the US Space Weapons Platform, and are easy to locate. Make sure you collect them before fighting Drake.



YOU ARE HERE!

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Locate every hidden package with our indispensable map.

(P) PAY 'N' SPRAY (T) TOOL SHOPS

(G) GUN SHOPS (01) HIDDEN PACKAGES

01 On the west side of the Stadium in a car park.
 02 Behind the Mars Cafe where Love Fist's heavy attacked you.
 03 In the sculpture outside the V.A.J. finance building.
 04 Behind the last building you jump from in the 'G-Spotlight' mission.
 05 In the lower Ambulance Garage at the Schuman Health Care Center.
 06 By the helipad on top of the five-storey building south of the V.A.J. building.
 07 By the middle desk in the downtown office where you begin the 'G-Spotlight' mission.
 08 Next to the Hi-Press Gas Hot Stream ramp behind the Moist Palms Hotel.
 09 On the west steps of the deserted green house.
 10 Inside the deserted building where The Thug went in the 'The Chase' mission. It's in the first-floor room with the broken wall and you need to drop into it from above.
 11 In the toilet inside Studio C.
 12 On east Prawn Island in a dead end.
 13 On the roof of the blue building by Film Studio D.
 14 Outside the North Point Mall.
 15 On the ground level of the multi-storey car park by the North Point Mall.
 16 Behind the flats to the east of the North Point Mall.
 17 Upstairs in the North Point Mall outside a shop with 'Sale' signs in the window.
 18 Go to the 'Gash' shop upstairs at the North Point Mall.
 19 On the pavement by the bridge leading to Prawn Island.
 20 Next to the RC Bandit track by the Jocksport sign.
 21 By the wall of the hairpin turn.
 22 On the highest board of the Hotel's pool.
 23 On the farthest tee at the Driving Range.
 24 East of the north Pay 'n' Spray in a backyard by a fence.
 25 In a bunker on the west side of Leaf Links.
 26 Under Vice Point bridge.
 27 Round the back of Mercedes' house.
 28 On the second rooftop where you chase the thug in 'The Chase' mission.
 29 Behind the Jewellery Shop counter.
 30 On the small island in the middle of a water hazard.
 31 Next to the Pizza Restaurant under the stairs of the apartment block.
 32 In the Pizza Restaurant.
 33 Round the back of the WK Charlot Hotel.
 34 On the roof of the building where Candy and the Congressman were having a ball.
 35 On the southern bridge connecting the golf islands.
 36 On the water's edge facing Golf Island.
 37 Behind The Malibu gates.
 38 At the end of the strut sticking out from the building under construction.
 39 By the pool on top of the building by The Malibu.
 40 In the alley behind SpandEx Delivery.
 41 On the pool balcony at Rock Star pool house.



42 At the front of the northeast house with the purple roof.
 43 In the Jacuzzi of the brown house with the broken basketball net.
 44 In a narrow alley between Diaz's west pool and his neighbour's property.
 45 Near the east pool of Diaz's mansion.
 46 Under the bridge heading to Starfish Island.
 47 In one of the VCPD upstairs offices.
 48 On one of the beach's lifeguard stations.
 49 In the outside shower block in the hotel grounds.
 50 Use a helicopter to get on top of the blue and white building.
 51 In front of the peach building by the pond.
 52 By the edge of the water next to the bridge.
 53 On the roof of the building joined to the DBP Security building.
 54 By the back door of your house near Rosenberg's building.
 55 By the pool of the pink apartment building.
 56 On the walkway below the Southern Bridge.
 57 Behind the west Ocean View Medical Foundation Research and Development building on ledge by the water.
 58 On the roof of the single storey building across the road from the Washington Mall.
 59 In a secluded corner of the Marina's underground car park.
 60 By the steps of the Island's southernmost building.
 61 On the rocks by the huts in the water.
 62 On the jetty in the water. It's the one with the wooden hut.
 63 On the steps leading up the lighthouse.
 64 Behind Phil's place.
 65 Inside Phil's shed.
 66 Down the stairs behind the building two doors north of Kaufman Cabs.
 67 Inside the roof of North Hait's corner building.
 68 Outside the nearest building on Kaufman Cabs' eastside.
 69 By the skeleton grave behind Funeraria Romero.
 70 In between the generators on the roof of the building that's connected to the north of the Print Works.
 71 By the Vice City Air Reserve Fort Baxter Air Base sign at the base's gates.
 72 Inside the Laundromat building.
 73 On the east corner of the Print Works under the 'Life's a Bitch' billboard.
 74 Outside the Dalquiri House.
 75 Under a plane at the northeast Airport.
 76 Behind the billboards on the way to the Airport.
 77 Across the road from Umberto's Restaurant behind a wall.
 78 In the corner doughnut shop.
 79 On the Kaufman Cabs billboard.
 80 On top of the four-storey building boasting a red awning.
 81 Behind the Airport Fire Station.
 82 In the terminal behind a wall by a telephone.
 83 On the roof of the Airport.
 84 Upstairs in the Car Showroom.
 85 Top level of Gate 8-1.
 86 Behind a pipe in between the four Jet fuel tanks.
 87 Underneath the ROCKSTAR jet in the hangar.
 88 On top of the southwestern-most jet outside the terminal.
 89 Between the two trailers at the main Airport car park.
 90 Underneath the southwestern-most jet outside the terminal.
 91 On top of the east loading bridge.
 92 On the roof of the McAdam Airways hangar.
 93 By the building and fence north of 8-ball's garage.
 94 In a little car park by the green and white flats near the Shipyard.
 95 On the southern helipad.
 96 In the office in the Seaplanes Tours hangar.
 97 On the east side of the northeast Cargo ship.
 98 On the roof of the Airport's southeast building.
 99 On the southwest Cargo ship.
 100 Below the Vice City Port Authority Main Building sign.

CODE-U-LIKE

Need to cheat your way to victory on a certain game? Write to us and we'll ease your pain.

■ STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS

(SLES 50826)

To complete the bonus objectives in a level you've already completed, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code GIMME.

For a Level Select in single player campaign mode, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code DOORDONOT.

To see photos of the development team for the game, go to Options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code JEDICOUNCIL.

To unlock Padme as a player in the Geonosis Academy Multiplayer level, go to Options and select Bonuses, then select codes. At this screen enter the code Natalie. To unlock all of the FMV scenes, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes, at this screen enter the code 12 PARSECS.

To unlock all the Multiplayer missions, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code JORG SACUL.

To unlock the Battle Droid in the Geonosis Academy level, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code TRADEFED.

To unlock the Wookie in the Geonosis Academy level, go to options and select Bonuses, then select Codes. At this screen enter the code NERFHERDER.

■ STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

(SLES 50831)

Having trouble with some missions? Below is a list of the codes to access every mission.

Enter the codes in the Cheats screen.

To access Mission 1 enter BEAST PIT.

To access Mission 2 enter GIMMEMYJETPACK.

To access Mission 3 enter CONVEYORAMA.

To access Mission 4 enter BIGCITYNIGHTS.

To access Mission 5 enter IEATNERFMEAT. To access Mission 6 enter VOTE4TRELL. To access Mission 7 enter LOCKUP. To access Mission 8 enter WHAT A RIOT. To access Mission 9 enter SHAFTED. To access Mission 10 enter BIGMOSQUITOS. To access Mission 11 enter ONEDEADDUG. To access Mission 12 enter WISHIHADMYSHIP. To access Mission 13 enter MOSGAMOS. To access Mission 14 enter TUSKENS R US. To access Mission 15 enter BIG BAD DRAGON. To access Mission 16 enter MONTROSSISBAD. To access Mission 17 enter VOSAISBADDER.

■ MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

(SLES 50717)

Having trouble finding the bonus items in the koffins? Try using this guide to lead you to some of the cool bonus items that can be purchased.

To access Baraka's Demise video open, Koffin XG (cost: 96 Ruby)

To access the Cave Arena Concept video open, Koffin DW (cost: 157 Ruby)

To access the cooking with Scorpion video, open Koffin UI (cost: 270 Onyx)

To access the Dragonfly Test video, open Koffin KC (cost: 292 Gold)

To access the Early Mortal Kombat Deadly Alliance promo video, open Koffin FL (cost: 264 Sapphire)

To access the Ice Palace Test video open, Koffin HT (cost: 462 Jade)

To access the Johnny Cage video, open Koffin JT (cost: 259 Platinum)

To access the Mortal Kombat 4 Arena concept video, open Koffin QD (cost: 264 Sapphire)

To access the Sarna Ruins Test video open, Koffin ST (cost: 153 Jade)

To access the Scorpion Cloth Test video, open Koffin DL (cost: 230 Platinum)

To access the Scorpion goes back to hell

video, open Koffin CX (cost: 203 Gold) To access the Swamp Bird Test video, open Koffin RX (cost: 135 Jade)

■ TIGER WOODS USA TOUR 2002

(SLES 50729)

Looking to unlock the bonus golfers? Try entering these codes at the Cheats screen. To unlock Brad Faxon enter ENOXAF14D.

To unlock Cedric "Ace" Andrews enter TSWERDNA120.

To unlock Colin Montgomery enter EYTNOM09E.

To unlock Jasper Parnevick enter OKIVENRAP02U.

To unlock Jim Furyk enter OKYRUF05R.

To unlock Justin Leonard enter RDRANOEL130.

To unlock Kellie Newman enter SNAMWEN172.

To unlock Lee Janzen enter INEZNAJ11W.

To unlock L'Mo enter P2UTAVAAT15S.

To unlock Notah Begay III enter DYAGEB04E.

To unlock Stuart Appleby enter UYBELPPA160.

To unlock Solita Lopez enter GZEPOL10R.

To unlock Super Tiger enter 2TREPUS01S.

To unlock Vijay Singh enter SHGNIS03P.

■ LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

(SLES 51045)

To activate the Cheat mode select Career mode and choose any wrestler. During Career mode enter one of each match types. You can either finish the match or exit immediately. After all match types have been entered, a message stating that the cheats can now be purchased in the shop will appear.

To unlock Andy Kaufman select Career mode and choose Jerry Lawler as your wrestler.

Defeat Kaufman to unlock him at the shop.

To unlock Big John Studd select Career mode and choose any wrestler. Defeat Big John Studd to unlock him at the shop.

To unlock British Bulldog select Career mode and choose Dynamite Kid. Successfully complete career mode to unlock British Bulldog at the shop.

TREASURE PLANET

Follow these guidelines to get yourself piles of riches.

THE RULEBOOK

Be thorough in your exploration and always take some time to take a good look around your surroundings by pressing **A**. You never know what you'll spot.

When jumping on to platforms – particularly moving ones – it can be tricky judging where to land. Use your shadow as an indicator to help you pick your spot.

Look before you leap. If a platform looks suspect, then the chances are it's collapsible. And if a platform wobbles when

you stand on it – move sharpish.

If you're walking along a narrow platform, press **B** to walk slowly. It'll save you from falling unnecessarily. After all, there's no time limit, so there's no need to rush!

Suss out tricky jumps before leaping by using the right analog stick to move the camera around. Before you jump, press **B** to recentre the camera.

Alleviate boredom during the loading screens by moving the analog sticks. The left stick controls direction and the right stick adjusts speed and rotation. What fun!



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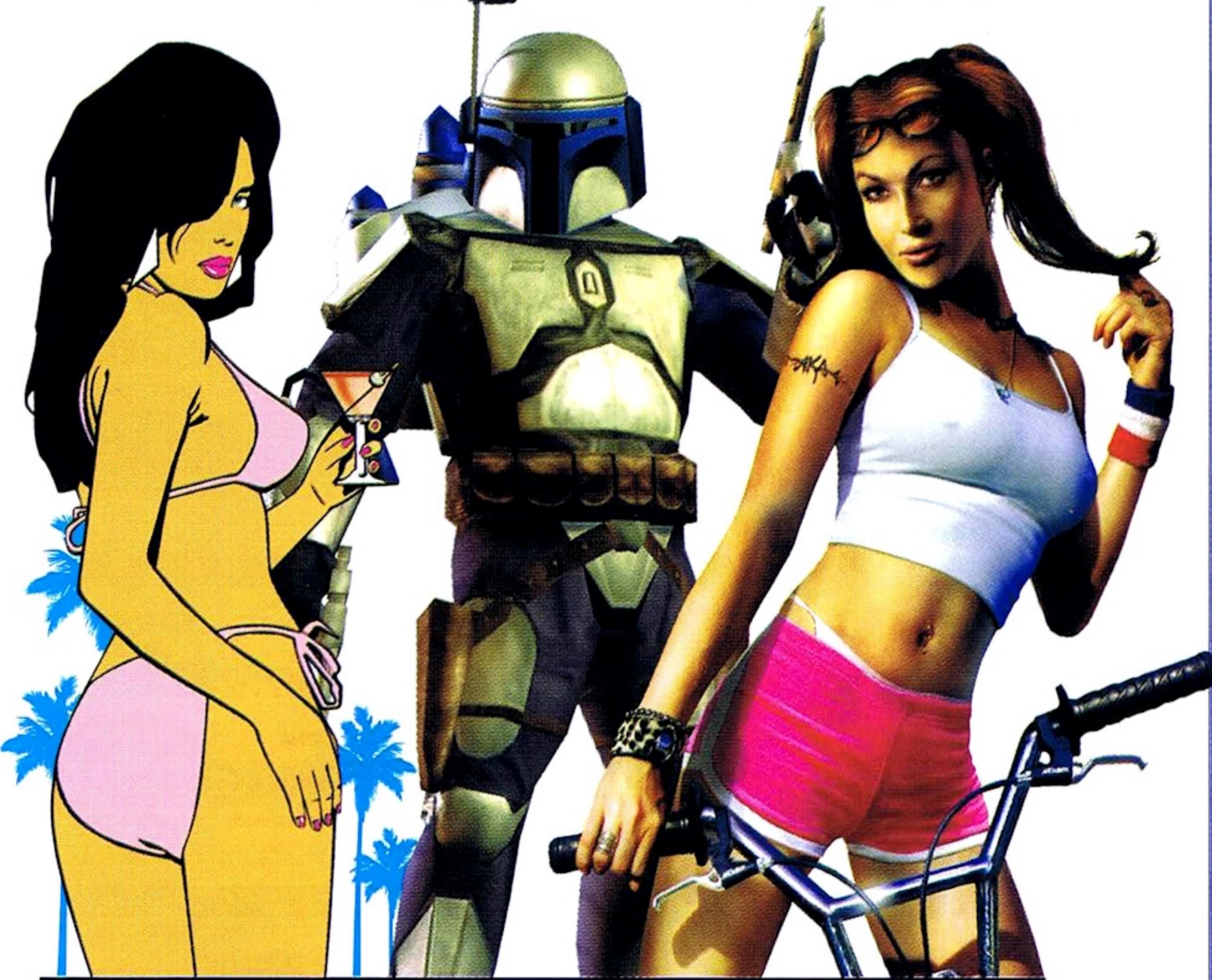
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PIN	GAME	CHEAT
13161	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Health
13161	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Health
13162	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Armour
13163	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Floating Cars
13164	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Weapons
13167	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Unlock Tank
14261	The Getaway	Double Health
14262	The Getaway	Armoured Car Weapon
06841	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Invincibility
06842	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Unlimited Ammo
06843	Medal of Honour: Frontline	1 Shot Kills
06844	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Gold Medal for Current Mission
06845	Medal of Honour: Frontline	Photon Torpedoes
12571	The Sims	All Locked Objects
12572	The Sims	All Objects Free
12573	The Sims	Unlock Party Motel
13651	BMX XXX	Unlock All Movies
13652	BMX XXX	Unlock All Levels
13653	BMX XXX	Unlock All Bikes
11301	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Matrix Cheat
11302	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Unlock Skaters
11303	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Perfect Rails
11304	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Perfect Manuals
06791	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	All Characters
06792	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	All Missions
06793	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	Unlock all Items
06794	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	Increase Items
04122	Turok Evolution	Weapons
04123	Turok Evolution	Level Skip
04124	Turok Evolution	Ammo
04125	Turok Evolution	Invisibility
04121	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
12521	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Refill Your Health
12522	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Full Arrows/Axes
03301	Grand Theft Auto 3	Weapons
03302	Grand Theft Auto 3	Money
03303	Grand Theft Auto 3	Tank
03304	Grand Theft Auto 3	Dodo Mode
03305	Grand Theft Auto 3	Break Off Limbs
04241	Cricket 2002	Super Batsman
07131	Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	BMW Z8
07132	Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	HSV Coupe GTS
07133	Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	McLaren F1
07134	Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Ferrari F50
07135	Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Ferrari F550
00061	Drakan	Invincibility
00062	Drakan	Increase Character
00063	Drakan	Increase Spells
00064	Drakan	Health
00065	Drakan	Money
09923	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	All Weapons
09921	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Level Skip
09922	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	God Mode
05921	No One Lives Forever	Level Select
11331	Red Faction 2	Super Health
11332	Red Faction 2	Unlimited Ammo
11333	Red Faction 2	Gibby Explosions
11334	Red Faction 2	Unlock All Cheats
12581	007 Nightfire	Level Select
12582	007 Nightfire	Upgrade Q Gadgets
11811	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Level Select
11812	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	All Special Features
11813	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Invincibility
12821	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	Unlock all Courses
12822	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	Unlock all Golfers
12821	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	Super Tiger
04351	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Cheats
04352	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Levels
04353	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All People
04354	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	All Movies
12001	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Tricks
12002	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Surfers
12003	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Suits
12004	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Boards
12005	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	All Levels
03251	Max Payne	Level Select
03252	Max Payne	Health
07391	Soldier of Fortune: Gold Edition	Invincibility
07392	Soldier of Fortune: Gold Edition	Full Ammo
07393	Soldier of Fortune: Gold Edition	Heavy Weapons
07394	Soldier of Fortune: Gold Edition	Hand to Hand & Explosive Weapons
02881	StuntMan	All Cars
02882	StuntMan	All Toys
02883	StuntMan	All Filmography
09871	The Scorpion King	Master Code
09872	The Scorpion King	Full Health and Weapons
09021	Conflict Desert Storm	Cheat Menu
07671	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Realistic Handling
07672	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Better Damage
02171	Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	Unlock All Bikes
08701	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	All Levels
08702	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Elvis Outfit
08311	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 1
08312	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 2
08313	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 3
08314	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 4
08315	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	Unlock Chapter 5
00321	Theme Park World	All Purchases Free
00322	Theme Park World	Golden Tickets
00323	Theme Park World	All Items Researched
07895	Men In Black 2: Alien Escape	Full Homing

shortlist

Your definitive guide to the ever expanding library of PlayStation 2 games.



So you've just bought a PlayStation 2, and you're confronted by a dauntingly huge line-up of games to choose from at your local gaming store. Now what?

The Shortlist is OPS2's one-stop guide to getting an idea of what's hot and what's not. As time goes on and new games come out, we drop some of the older games that don't warrant being remembered, replacing them with newer games that score well in the reviews section.

If you just want to find the best of the best, look for the games that receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award.

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the lastest and most up-to-date information but don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been round since the Atari 2600 by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.

AI: Artificial Intelligence.

Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.

Boarders: Snowboarders or games featuring the alpine sport.

Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.

Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also 'FMV').

CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.

Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.

D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller:

Controller for PSone.

Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).

ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.

E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).

Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.

FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).

Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.

High res: High resolution (graphics).

HUD: Head Up Display. Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.

Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.

Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.

L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.

Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.

Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.

PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in the real world.

RPG: Role-playing game.

RTS: Real-time strategy.

R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.

Sim: Simulation.

Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.

USB: Port to connect peripherals such as keyboard to PS2.

**If there's a term, word or phrase that's still taxing your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here.*

007 NIGHTFIRE	★ OVERALL 08
Aside from the occasionally iffy AI, this has enough variety to make a solid single player game, and the multiplayer gives it longevity.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	OVERALL 07
The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz, nifty effects for star players and a serious challenge at the highest difficulty level, but sadly lacking in game modes.	
7 BLADES	OVERALL 06
Ninja-styled adventure with a 'healthy' dose of chop-socky gameplay.	
18 WHEELER	OVERALL 06
Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.	
ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER	OVERALL 07
Best Ace Combat yet. A graphically-polished flight sim with a variety of missions. Best with a flight-stick of some kind.	
AFL LIVE 2003	OVERALL 06
Good enough to be a must buy for footy fans, but not flashy or deep enough to compete with big budget sport sims.	
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	★ OVERALL 08
There's more than enough inline action to keep you impressed and entertained until the next Tony Hawk says, "Buy me, dude!"	BRONZE PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
AIRBLADE	★ OVERALL 08
Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive airs – everything you could want hoverboarding to be. Back to the Future anyone?	BRONZE PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002	OVERALL 07
An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.	
ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE	OVERALL 06
An undeniably scary survival horror game series, but one that fails to frighten the pants off the PS2 in this comeback.	
AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0	OVERALL 07
Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 puzzler Wetrix. Essentially it's Tetris with water. Weird, but worthwhile.	
ARCTIC THUNDER	OVERALL 07
Crude visuals, but plenty of fast and furious gameplay.	
ARMORED CORE 2	OVERALL 07
Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter. Not for the casual gamer after a quick fix, but perfect for those who love their sims.	
ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE	OVERALL 02
Very dull helicopter game. Hardly surprising from arguably the worst series of games to grace a console.	
ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE	OVERALL 01
On-rail shooter that manages to sink to new depths of soldiering tedium. Avoid at all costs.	
ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2	OVERALL 03
Another poorly realised shooter, from the series that stars the little green plastic soldiers.	
AUTO MODELLISTA	★ OVERALL 08
The love-child of cel-shaded graphics and Gran Turismo. Despite its cartoony appearance, this is a fairly serious racing game.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE	★ OVERALL 08
Play D&D on a console! Quite simplistic and arcadey, but this is still a great RPG that adds nicely to the PS2's line up.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
BARBARIAN	OVERALL 07
A rough-cut fighting game with RPG elements and branching storylines.	

YOUR KEY TO SHORTLIST

GOLD

Only for games that scored the elusive 10/10.

SILVER

Awarded to games with a mighty 9/10.

BRONZE

Given to games that scored an impressive 8/10.

BATMAN VENGEANCE

OVERALL 06

Interesting action adventure, but just a little too 'on rails' to provide a real challenge.

BLADE II

OVERALL 04

Cuddy controls stop this otherwise peachy beat 'em up from realising its full potential.

BLOOD OMEN 2

OVERALL 06

An occasionally very satisfying blood sucking adventure let down by largely unoriginal gameplay.

BURNOUT

★ OVERALL 08

OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action that will threaten your no claim bonus.

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

★ OVERALL 08

An even more intense racing experience than its predecessor. The Fast & the Furious in a video game.

CAPCOM VS. SNK 2

★ OVERALL 08

A superb 2D beat-'em-up from the house that knows all there is to know about combat. With endless two player fun.

CART FURY: CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

OVERALL 06

Arcade racer with crazy physics and a dose of high-speed hard shoulderng.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

★ OVERALL 09

Sets new standards in rally racing visuals, with impressive car damage and weather effects. A must have for offroad racing fans.

COMMANDOS 2

★ OVERALL 08

A daunting but extremely worthy and rewarding strategy game where the player controls a team of operatives in WWII missions.

CONFLICT ZONE

OVERALL 06

A pretty run-of-the-mill RTS game that cleverly forces you to take account of media coverage.

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

OVERALL 07

A fantastic trip down memory lane for old school veterans, but Contra may confuse or confound the contemporary gamer.

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX

OVERALL 06

Crash spins onto PS2 but little has changed from PSone. Time for some new ideas with titles like Ratchet & Clank setting the new standards.

CRAZY TAXI

★ OVERALL 08

Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer. If you want speed, buy this now.

CRICKET 2002

★ OVERALL 08

The best leather-on-willow sim on any console, ever. Relax and make like it's always summer.

DARK CLOUD

OVERALL 07

An enthralling RPG with atmospheric music and a world-building element thrown in for good measure.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2

OVERALL 07

Orthodox but impressive, this BMX sim has an inventive array of tricks.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

OVERALL 07

Blistering beat-'em-up that's famous for its stealthy gameplay and collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters.

DEFENDER

OVERALL 07

A modern day 3D shooter based on the '80s arcade classic. Far better than the average retro-remake.

DEUS EX

★ OVERALL 09

The thinking man's action shooter and genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.

TOP 5

DRIVING GAMES

1. GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Cars, crime and eighties overkill. Pretty in pink.

2. THE GETAWAY

Revenge and epic car chases through London streets.

3. STUNTMAN

This is how stunt driving should be done. Classic.

4. TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Apocalyptic deathmatches in cars! Vroom. Boom!

5. SPY HUNTER

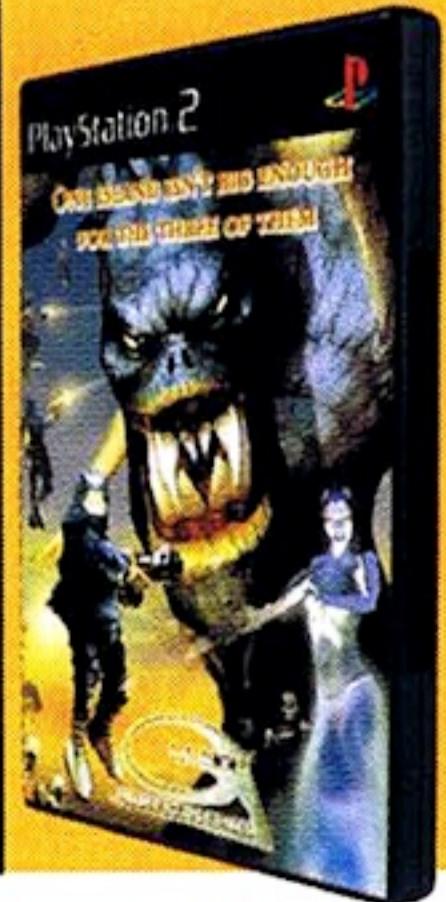
Gadget-laden car/boat/bike espionage-a-thon.

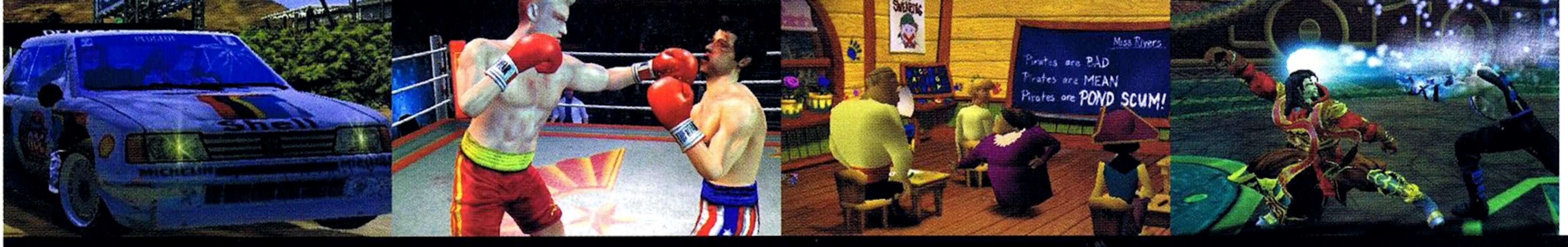


DEVIL MAY CRY	★ OVERALL 09
Melding battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.	
DEVIL MAY CRY 2	SILVER PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Die-hards may cry at the new direction, but there's still enough gorgeous style and firearms in DMC2 to satisfy action junkies.	
DNA	OVERALL 06
Gene warfare and confusing puzzles abound in this bizarre manga adventure.	
DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK	OVERALL 04
A first-generation platformer that suffers from Stone Age gameplay and graphics.	
DRAGON'S LAIR	OVERALL 02
Unplayable retro adventure. Should have stayed firmly stuck on the Laser Disc where it belonged.	
DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE	★ OVERALL 08
Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3	★ OVERALL 08
More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred only slightly by samey gameplay.	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS	OVERALL 07
A solid, entertaining expansion pack that will have <i>Dynasty Warriors 3</i> fans whooping with joy.	
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER THE FUTURE	★ OVERALL 08
You're a dolphin and it's up to you to save the world from an alien invasion. Relax in the new age calm underwater adventure.	
ENDGAME	★ OVERALL 09
Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre: Innovative, refreshing and most of all, a tonne of fun.	
ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND	★ OVERALL 08
Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.	
ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD	OVERALL 06
Graphically impressive athletics sim marred only by iffy AI.	
ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT	OVERALL 06
Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sln bln.	
ESPN NBA 2NIGHT	OVERALL 06
Hardcore gameplay makes this one for basketball heads only.	
ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING	OVERALL 05
Not-so-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches. You're best off sticking with <i>Tony Hawk's</i> .	
ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING	OVERALL 06
Lifelike snowboarder, ruined by unsightly bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.	
EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION	OVERALL 05
A dull, button mashing affair.	
EVERGRACE	OVERALL 02
An ultimately depressing RPG, that fails to engage the player at any meaningful level.	
EVIL TWIN	OVERALL 05
Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, so-so animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.	
EXTERMINATION	OVERALL 07
Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.	
EXTREME-G 3	★ OVERALL 08
A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the <i>Wipeout</i> series.	
F1 2001	OVERALL 07
Another solid PS2 Formula One title, but ultimately it's a tad soulless.	
F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000	OVERALL 06
Hardcore F1 fans will find this a little too easy.	

FANTAVISION	OVERALL 05
The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.	
FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE	OVERALL 07
One of the most realistic racing simulations ever. More for driving game experts than casual racers.	
FIFA 2003	★ OVERALL 08
Despite closing the gap with a more realistic football simulation, this is still a goal behind <i>Pro Evolution Soccer 2</i> .	
FINAL FANTASY X	★ OVERALL 09
Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG. A classic Square adventure with next-gen presentation and production.	
FORMULA ONE 2003	★ OVERALL 08
Another F1 corker! All the drivers, tracks and cars included. Load it up and feel the speed. Feel the need for speed.	
FREEKSTYLE	OVERALL 07
This is potentially a great game, but it's scuppered by careless lack of fairness and failure to reward skill with progression.	
FUR FIGHTERS	★ OVERALL 08
Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.	
G1 JOCKEY	OVERALL 05
More like an exercise in statistical analysis than a horse racing game, with bland graphics and sound.	
GIO GIO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE	OVERALL 06
Brilliant cel-shaded graphics bring a cast of weirdo anime characters to life in a fighting game based on a comic series.	
GHOST RECON	OVERALL 07
A squad-based first person shooter that suffers from a cumbersome interface for ordering troops about, often degenerating into arcade-style run-and-gun gaming.	
GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO	OVERALL 06
The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.	
GITAROO MAN	★ OVERALL 08
If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.	
GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA	OVERALL 07
An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.	
GRAND THEFT AUTO 3	★ OVERALL 10
Not quite as good as its neon-soaked, '80s prequel but it's still fantastic fun and can now be found for bargain prices.	
GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY	★ OVERALL 10
Better than <i>GTA 3</i> ! Cars, crooks, coke, and chaos with total freedom to do what you want. A must have for any gamer, serious or not.	
GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC	★ OVERALL 09
If you didn't know already, <i>GT3</i> is the greatest racing game in the world. Speed down to the store and buy it now.	
GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA	★ OVERALL 08
A more accessible version of <i>GT3</i> , with concept cars. Perfect for those who just want to race, rather than play mechanic.	
GRAVITY GAMES	OVERALL 04
An unoriginal rip off of the <i>Mat Hoffman</i> series, offering little reason to break away from the aforementioned pearlrs.	
GUMBALL 3000	OVERALL 03
A decidedly crap racing title that fails to deliver on all fronts. Not something to bother with considering how many other decent racers are about.	
G-SURFERS	OVERALL 07
Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.	
GUILTY GEAR X	★ OVERALL 08
Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.	
GUNGRAVE	OVERALL 06
Bizarre Manga inspired shooting game with gorgeous visuals, but a distinct lack of depth to back up all that eye candy.	
GUN GRIFFON BLAZE	OVERALL 07
A mech shooter for robot obsessive-types everywhere.	

HALF-LIFE	★ OVERALL 09
The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.	
HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	SILVER PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Simplistic puzzles and gorgeous graphics make this a winner for younger fans of the books and films.	
HEADHUNTER	OVERALL 07
<i>Dirty Harry</i> meets <i>MGS2</i> in a world where the law is controlled by bounty hunters. There's a great game hidden here somewhere.	
HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING	★ OVERALL 08
An epic platform game that provides a seamless adventure with no loading interrupting the action.	
HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC	OVERALL 03
Patchy PC-style fantasy adventure.	
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN	★ OVERALL 09
A disturbingly realistic take on living the life of a hired killer. Not one for the squeamish or pure of heart, but it contains brilliant gaming.	
INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER	SILVER PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Genuine squads and more instant gratification take <i>ISS</i> up to the PS2 level.	
ISS 2	OVERALL 07
More arcade than <i>PES</i> with better commentary, but dodgy ball physics and animation. Not for soccer purists.	
JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY	★ OVERALL 09
A brilliant platformer from the makers of <i>Crash Bandicoot</i> that introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.	
JAMES BOND 007: AGENT UNDER FIRE	★ OVERALL 08
A thrilling single-player Bond experience, with a great four-player mode and beautiful Bond girls.	
JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD	OVERALL 03
A motocross game that's just like the real thing (minus the thrills, speed, gritty handling and mud).	
JET SKI RIDERS	OVERALL 06
Great water effects and Kawasaki-licensed Jet Skis. Shame about the racing...	
KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO	OVERALL 06
A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.	
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER	★ OVERALL 08
A bit too similar to <i>Tony Hawk</i> for our liking, but still the best surfing game around.	
KESSEN	OVERALL 07
A real-time strategy game set in feudal Japan, where you get to command a huge army. Strategy fans only.	
KINGDOM HEARTS	★ OVERALL 08
A beautifully produced RPG with Disney and Square characters. Don't let the kiddy vibe fool you, this one's very tough.	
KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL	BRONZE PlayStation 2 ★ OVERALL 08
Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid. Fun stuff.	
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001	OVERALL 06
A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not a match for <i>Rocky</i> though.	
KURI KURI MIX	OVERALL 07
A blend of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. An odd but worthwhile addition to any PS2 collection.	
LARGO WINCH	OVERALL 05
Based on a French comic character, this spy game is too linear and lacks the interactivity that is needed to maintain a gamer's attention.	
LEGAIA 2: DUAL SAGA	OVERALL 07
A Japanese RPG that uses a combat system full of combos and special moves. A host of mini-games help prevent this from falling into the 'generic' basket.	
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	OVERALL 05
'Violent ballet' with a shortage of modes and options. There are much better recreations of Pro wrestling.	
LE MANS 24 HOURS	★ OVERALL 08
Accessible for gamers daunted by sim-style vehicle handling but has depth and thrills.	
BRONZE PlayStation 2	




LMA MANAGER 2002

A-grade soccer management game, but for die-hard football fans only.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Superb hack and slash gaming based on the movie, not the book. Not very deep, but delivers huge battles.

MARK OF KRI

An enjoyable single player adventure that hacks, stabs and slashes at the beat 'em stereotype. Check it out.

MADDEN NFL 2003

Whilst realistic enough, of the two major NFL games around, this is the flashier. Best for those who want high scores over realism.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

Whilst impressive in many areas and exceptional in some, MHPB2 doesn't quite live up to expectations.

MAX PAYNE

A fine shooting game that is underrated. Fantastic innovations and a very cinematic feel lifts the action.

MAXIMO

A tribute to Ghosts 'N' Goblins and an excellent mix of retro and modern gaming.

MDK2: ARMAGEDDON

Originally on Dreamcast and PSOne, this third-person shooter has lost nothing in translation. Destined to be a cult classic.

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

A very realistic FPS that has been wowing audiences the world over since the game was released.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

Incredibly comprehensive Metal Gear package for newbies but MGS2 owners will struggle to find \$110's worth.

MICROMACHINES

Nothing particularly 'next-gen' about this instalment of the series, but an excellent racing diversion nonetheless.

MODERN GROOVE: MINISTRY OF SOUND

An entertaining lightshow generator, containing five full dance albums. Not quite up to the standards set by MTV Music Generator.

MONSTERS, INC.

Disney Platform game, based on the film. Initially amusing but sloppy and basic with a lifespan of no more than a few hours, though the film clips are entertaining.

MOTO GP

Gran Turismo on two wheels? A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated play.

MOTO GP2

A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

MOTO GP3

A little repetitive and far too similar to the last two games. Still, it's the best motorbike game on the system thus far.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR

Home DJ sample/mixer music maker. It's enormous fun and nigh-on faultless. This is exciting and well put together.

MX SUPERFLY 2003: FEAT RICKY CARMICHAEL

Polished and engaging motorcross sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect. An excellent extreme game.

MX RIDER

Motocross/supercross sim that lacks the true grittiness and excitement of the sport.

NBA 2K3

Not only realistic, but packed with plenty of features as well, offering a wide selection of game modes.

NBA HOOPZ

Instant arcade-styled basketball sim, but there are better ones on the street.

NBA LIVE 2002

An update of NBA Live 2001? Only for true basketball nuts.

★ OVERALL 08
BRONZE

PlayStation 2

★ OVERALL 09
SILVER

PlayStation 2

★ OVERALL 09
SILVER

PlayStation 2

★ OVERALL 10
GOLO

PlayStation 2

★ OVERALL 08
BRONZE

PlayStation 2

★ OVERALL 08
PLATINUM WATCH

The Starfighter series remains LucasArts' best work on PS2. Get the original *Star Wars: Starfighter*, now only \$49.95 in all parts of the galaxy.

SECOND COMING

We resurrect a title from the gaming graveyard.

SMUGGLER'S RUN

While just about every organism with opposable thumbs, a pulse and a PS2 has long since been seduced and left spent but ecstatic by GTAIll and Vice City, there's another Rockstar title that's well worth tracking down. *Smuggler's Run* is a mission-based driving game that has you tear-arsing around huge vistas, picking up and distributing contraband while the cops do their nuts hunting you down. The Single-player mode is fun, but get some mates together for a four-way booty run and you'll find one of most enjoyable multiplayer games on PS2, even now.

PlayStation 2
SMUGGLER'S RUN
...the questions turn to page 14 now!

NBA STREET

Great looks, great to play, but not what most will want. There's room for improvement.

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

One of the better arcade racers to grace the PS2. Truly the best of the NFS series, not just a PS2 update.

NFL 2K3

This is the game to own for anyone into American football thanks to its ultra-realistic graphics and gameplay.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB

American football game that has unique features, but unable to compete with Madden 2003.

NHL 2003

The definitive ice hockey videogame, but only a slight improvement on NHL 2002.

NHL HITZ 2002

A satisfying, if short-lived, arcade-style ice hockey game.

NY RACE

Average future taxi racer, based on the opening sequence of Luc Besson's sci-fi epic *The Fifth Element*. Nothing crazy to see here.

ONI

New character animation in an enjoyable 3rd person sci-fi romp.

ONIMUSH: WARLORDS

Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.

OPERATION WINBACK

Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.

ORPHEEN

A disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2

Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really worth revisiting for nostalgia.

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

Based on the race of the same name, this sim does little to inspire interest.

PENNY RACERS

A half-baked and underfed GT3, with just a few good tracks, it's a difficult one to recommend to anybody wanting a great racer.

POLICE 24/7

Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-'em-up.

POOLMASTER

Dull pool sim, despite some tidy ball physics.

PRIDE FC

The new king of the ring! *Pride FC* is the most realistic fighting simulation available on any system to date. Great stuff!

PRISONER OF WAR

Escaping from POW camps is all well and good, but you remain a prisoner of often rigid game objectives. Even so, this is a bold, compelling adventure game.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

For the second year running, the Pro Evolution series has been the best soccer-sim on any system. Lacks licences, but has total realism.

PROJECT EDEN

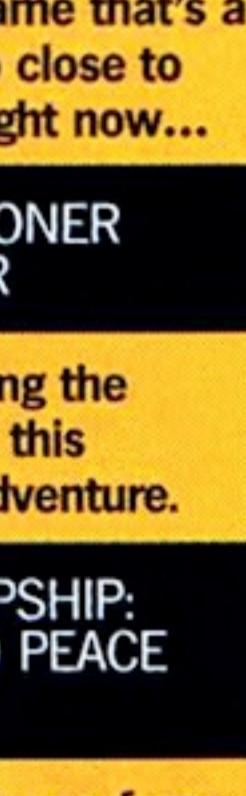
Look beyond some not-great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying first-person shooter/adventure.

QUAKE III



SLED STORM	OVERALL 06
A maxed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.	
SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT	OVERALL 07
Deep & stylish this game suffers from disproportionate leaps in difficulty that can be off-putting.	
SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES	OVERALL 07
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.	
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION	OVERALL 05
No-brainer first-person shooter that's average at best. Only for those craving mindless violence.	
SOUL REAVER 2	OVERALL 07
Soul-sucking fantasy adventure that revolves around the exploits of Raziel and his huge Reaver sword.	
SPACE RACE	OVERALL 05
The cartoon Kart racer in its simplest form. Lacks originality and is a poor Mario Kart rip-off, but uses cel-shading to nice effect.	
SPIDER-MAN	OVERALL 07
It doesn't display huge innovations over its PSone counterpart, although it's a solid and enjoyable Spidey title either way.	
SPLASHDOWN	OVERALL 07
Above average Sea-Doo racer, with impressive water effects. The racing is sluggish though.	
SPY HUNTER	★ OVERALL 08
Pretend to be James Bond. Captures the spirit of the original game and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.	
SSX TRICKY	★ OVERALL 09
Inventive rainbow coloured high speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses, and crazier characters.	
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	OVERALL 07
Gorgeous to look at, taking the gamer into the Star Wars universe, but is let down by repetitive gameplay.	
STAR WARS: CLONE WARS	OVERALL 07
One for the Star Wars collectors, and a great battlefield in its own right. Shallow but still worth investigation.	
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER	★ OVERALL 09
Mesmerising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects. Great fun.	
STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING	OVERALL 05
Banal cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.	
STATE OF EMERGENCY	OVERALL 06
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.	
STREET FIGHTER EX3	OVERALL 06
A decent enough 2D/3D fighting game, but is milking the series to death. There are better 2D fighters from the same company.	
STREET HOOPS	OVERALL 06
More about collecting fancy duds than having a decent game of basketball, which is why this hoops title misses from the line.	
STUNTMAN	★ OVERALL 08
Won't have the wide appeal of the Driver games due to its difficulty, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.	
SUMMONER 2	★ OVERALL 08
Follow-up to the RPG launch title. More action orientated than the original, but still an epic adventure for fans of fantasy.	
SUPER TRUCKS	OVERALL 04
Bland, arcadey racing that fails to convey the impression of racing mammoth trucks.	
SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE	OVERALL 04
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.	
SWORD OF THE SAMURAI	OVERALL 07
Sword of the Samurai is a slow, ponderous, but intelligent game that combines strategy with gore.	
TARZAN FREERIDE	OVERALL 04
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.	

TAZ: WANTED	OVERALL 05
Despite some neat cel-shading effects and amusing Looney Toons content, this platformer is a bit too bland to warrant attention.	
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	★ OVERALL 08
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves make it a worthwhile purchase.	
TEKKEN 4	★ OVERALL 09
Continuing the tradition of fighting game excellence. The first Tekken game to include free-movement.	
TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN	★ OVERALL 08
An infusion of ninja style and killer gameplay across nine sumptuous levels. A great return to form for a classic title.	
THE BOUNCER	OVERALL 06
A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.	
THE GETAWAY	★ OVERALL 09
Sony's answer to <i>Grand Theft Auto</i> , with a decidedly darker and nastier storyline. Offers an amazingly life-like replica of London.	
THE HOOPS	★ OVERALL 08
Strictly for gamers of pre-school age, this is a faithful and entertaining reproduction of the popular kids' show.	
THE MUMMY RETURNS	OVERALL 05
Sub-standard, adventure-based movie tie-in. You're better sticking to the more reliable <i>Tomb Raider</i> collection.	
THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE	OVERALL 06
It's <i>Crazy Taxi</i> but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.	
THE SIMS	★ OVERALL 09
A one-of-a-kind gaming experience that even your mum will enjoy, with extras to make your PC gaming friends jealous.	
THE THING	★ OVERALL 08
Not only does it do justice to the classic horror film, but also introduces fear and trust issues to the survival-horror genre.	
THE WEAKEST LINK	OVERALL 04
You'll get more enjoyment playing along with the show than you will from putting up with the viper-tongued host.	
THEME PARK WORLD	OVERALL 07
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstiles a-spinnin' is your prime directive.	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003	OVERALL 07
Has an excellent one-two passing system and is a solid football title, but is still plays in the shadow of <i>Pro Evolution 2</i> and <i>FIFA 2003</i> .	
THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX	OVERALL 07
A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002	OVERALL 06
Authentic golf sim, a tad undermined by a random control system.	
TIME CRISIS 2	★ OVERALL 08
PS2's first on-rails light gun title sets the standard for others to follow. Has a great two-player co-op mode.	
TIMESPLITTERS	★ OVERALL 09
Fun, fast, frantic and inventive first-person shooter. Buy it for the addictive split-screen multiplayer madness.	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	★ OVERALL 10
Takes the multiplayer from <i>TimeSplitters</i> and adds heaps of options. Major visual upgrades, I-Link for 16-player games – the works!	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL	★ OVERALL 10
Move over Snake, Sam's the new special agent in town! <i>Splinter Cell</i> is an innovative game with some very cool touches.	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	OVERALL 04
Fantastic skate sim that's perfect to play whether you've got two minutes or two hours to spare.	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4	★ OVERALL 10
With some new moves, the series is taken in a new direction. Skate around, interact with locals, and do things at your own pace.	
TOP GUN	★ OVERALL 10
A flight sim that appears to have been designed by folks who have never seen a plane before.	

PLATINUM WATCH We're not sure of the exact release date, but slithery spine-chiller <i>Silent Hill 2</i> will be out on Platinum any day soon.	TREASURE PLANET An excellent take on the Disney movie of the same name, providing platform game goodness for younger gamers.	★ OVERALL 08
	TUROK: EVOLUTION Boasts a wicked line-up of weapons and a variety of gaming styles, but suffers from crappy AI and frame rate issues.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 06
	TWIN CALIBER One of the shoddiest shooters around. Takes an interesting twin-pistol gaming concept and ruins it with slow gameplay, chronic control issues.	OVERALL 03
	TWISTED METAL: BLACK This is everything that you'd expect a <i>Twisted Metal</i> game to be on PS2 – and then some.	★ OVERALL 08
	UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE A very run of the mill soccer title which, with its very narrow focus on a single tournament, has extremely limited appeal. If you have <i>Pro Evolution</i> or <i>FIFA</i> , you don't need this.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 06
TOP 5 WAR GAMES 	UFC THROWDOWN Arguably the most realistic fighting game ever made, but extremely repetitive. One for fighting game nuts only.	OVERALL 07
	UNREAL TOURNAMENT Totally over-the-top first-person shooter. Makes for a nice alternative to <i>Quake III</i> , but is outclassed totally by <i>TimeSplitters 2</i> .	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08
	V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER Real damage. Real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2!	★ OVERALL 09
	VICTORIOUS BOXERS Offbeat Japanese boxing title that lacks the killer punch. Pointless to track down while games such as <i>Rocky</i> are about.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 04
	VIRTUA COP ELITE While this may deliver perfect conversions of the two arcade classics, there are far better light gun games available today, making this a bland experience.	OVERALL 03
1. MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE WWII FPS that's top of the heap.	V-RALLY 3 Not as instantly playable as <i>WRC II Extreme</i> or <i>Colin McRae Rally 3</i> but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08
	VAMPIRE NIGHT A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest.	★ OVERALL 08
	VIRTUA TENNIS 2 Far and away the best Tennis simulation to grace the PS2. The World Circuit mode provides an awesome long term challenge.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08
	WAR OF THE MONSTERS <i>War of the Monsters</i> is a big, brash game that explodes with charm and burns brightly... but not for very long.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 07
	WILD WILD RACING Off-road buggy-racing game with initially discouraging handling. Stick with it, though, and the Stunt mode can become quite addictive.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 06
2. CONFLICT: DESERT STORM Great game that's a little too close to home right now...	WIPEOUT FUSION Style and substance are here in the most fully realised <i>Wipeout</i> yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets.	★ OVERALL 09
	WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002 Extremely playable snooker sim that may convert sceptics. Take part in the all-star tournament playing as Hendry or Doherty.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08
	WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER TANKS Arcade tank sim that's brilliant in Four-player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in single-player mode, though.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 07
	WORMS BLAST A Tetris-like departure from the usual <i>Worms</i> fare, but one that lacks depth. Fans of the <i>Worms</i> games be aware this is more like <i>Bust-A-Move</i> than what you're used to.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 06
	WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS An amusing mission-based driving game that features excellent collision effects, with cars that break down piece by piece.	OVERALL 07
3. PRISONER OF WAR Outwitting the Nazis in this tense adventure.	WRC II EXTREME Don't let the 'extreme' title fool you, this is pure rally realism. Not as pretty as <i>Colin McRae Rally 3</i> , but has all the official stuff.	★ OVERALL 09
	WWE SMACKDOWN 4! 'SHUT YOUR MOUTH!' This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWE experience on a console yet.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08
	ZONE OF THE ENDERS Absolutely brilliant for anime fans who want to see high-speed mech combat.	BRONZE PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 09
	COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE Enjoyable, meticulously detailed WWII RTS.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> OVERALL 09
	WWE SMACKDOWN 4! 'SHUT YOUR MOUTH!' This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWE experience on a console yet.	SILVER PlayStation 2 <small>OFFICIAL MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA</small> ★ OVERALL 08

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This month's special!

This fantastic magazine will answer all your developer queries. But wait, there's more! We'll also throw in the latest news, views and opinions from industry leaders. Can you afford not to read your fill?

GENERATION X

WIN ONE OF 10 X-PLOSIVE X-MEN 2 PACKS!

X WILL MARK the spot in April when Activision's *X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge* PlayStation 2 game and 20th Century Fox's *X-Men 2* motion picture and *X-Men 1.5* DVD all arrive. Releasing in cinemas April 30, *X-Men 2* packs in even more action than the first movie as it explores the increasingly fierce battle between mutants and the distrusting humans. *X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge* releases simultaneously with the movie and focuses on Wolverine and his search to discover the truth about how he was created.

To help prepare you for the *X-Men 2* game and movie, the *X-Men 1.5* DVD comes with previews of both and a new enhanced edition of the original movie, along with a stack of x-tra features. Each one of the 10 *X-Men 2* packs includes:

- AN *X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE* PLAYSTATION 2 GAME
- AN *X-MEN 1.5* DVD
- AN *X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE* COLLECTOR'S WATCH
- AN *X-MEN 2* COLLECTOR'S MINI-POSTER
- AN *X-MEN 2* STANDEE

To be in the running for these x-plosive *X-Men 2* packs, simply tell us the name of one of the mutants starring in *X-Men 2*. Follow the competition entry details at the bottom of the page and mark your entries to "Generation X".



HOW TO ENTER – Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition in the subject line or alternatively, send envelopes via snail mail to: Official PlayStation Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022. E-mail entrants are entitled to one e-mail per competition only.

Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the comp, your name, age, phone number and address. All competitions close May 30, 2003. Note: Images of prizes as shown above may vary from the appearance of the actual prizes received due to circumstances beyond the publisher's control.

MARVEL

20th CENTURY FOX

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NEXT MONTH

PLAYSTATION® 2 JUNE ISSUE

CITY OF ANGELS

CAN LARA STILL CUT IT? OPS2 DELIVERS THE VERDICT THE WORLD'S BEEN WAITING FOR!

NEXT MONTH
IN OFFICIAL
AUSTRALIAN
PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE

ENTER THE MATRIX

WE PLUG INTO THE MATRIX TO GIVE YOU THE EXCLUSIVE REVIEW OF THIS BLOCKBUSTER!

CRIME OF THE CENTURY

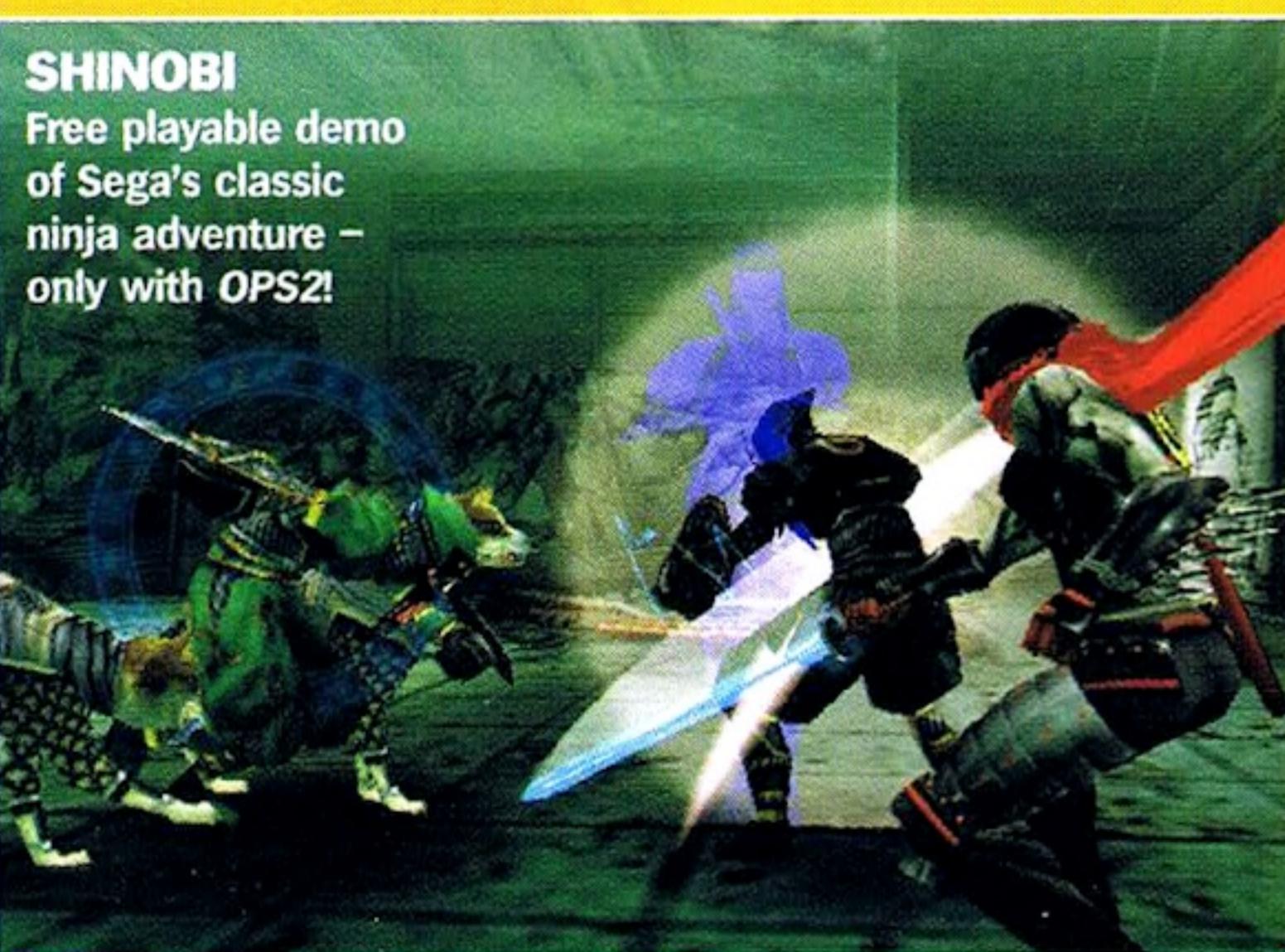
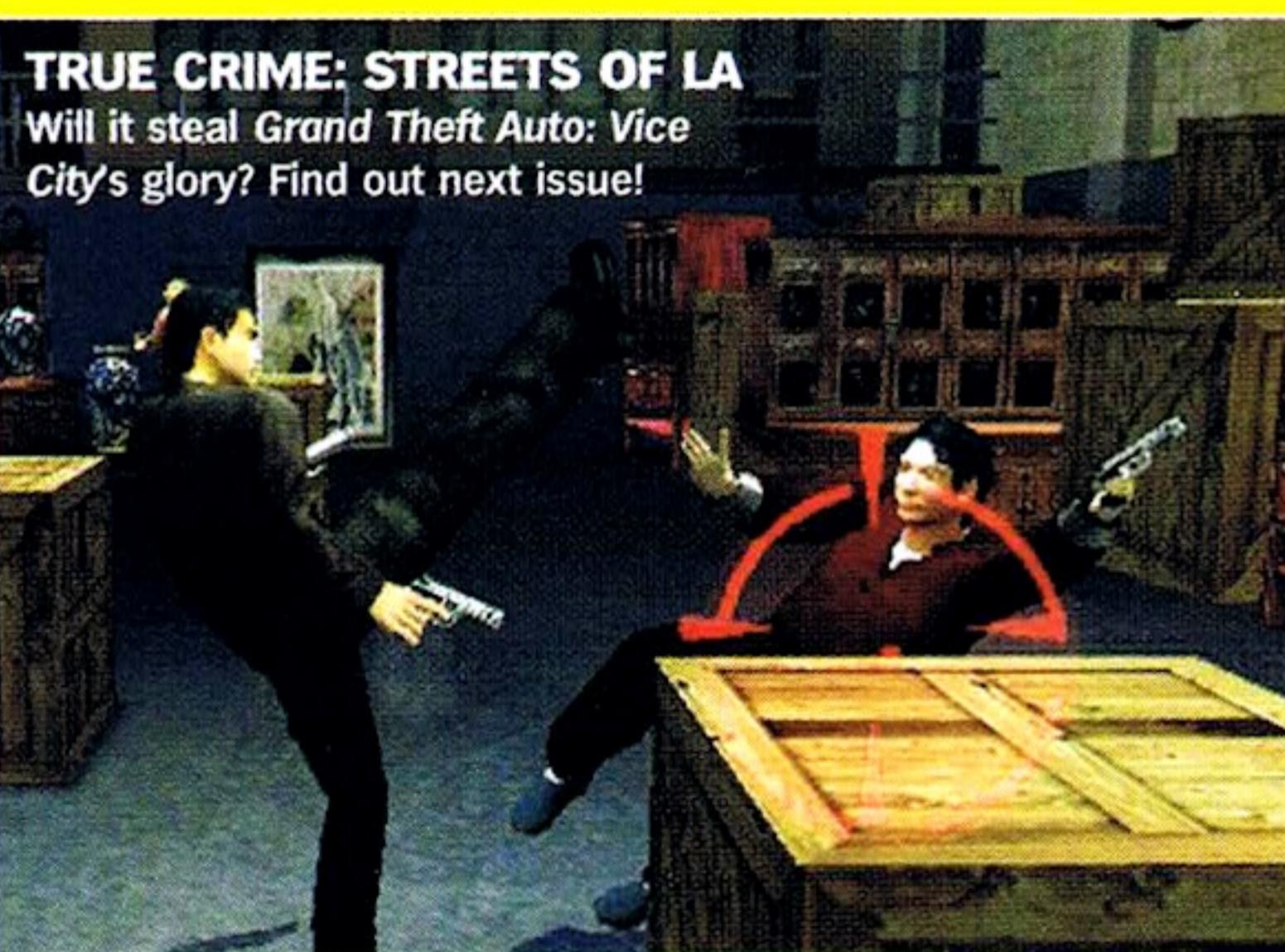
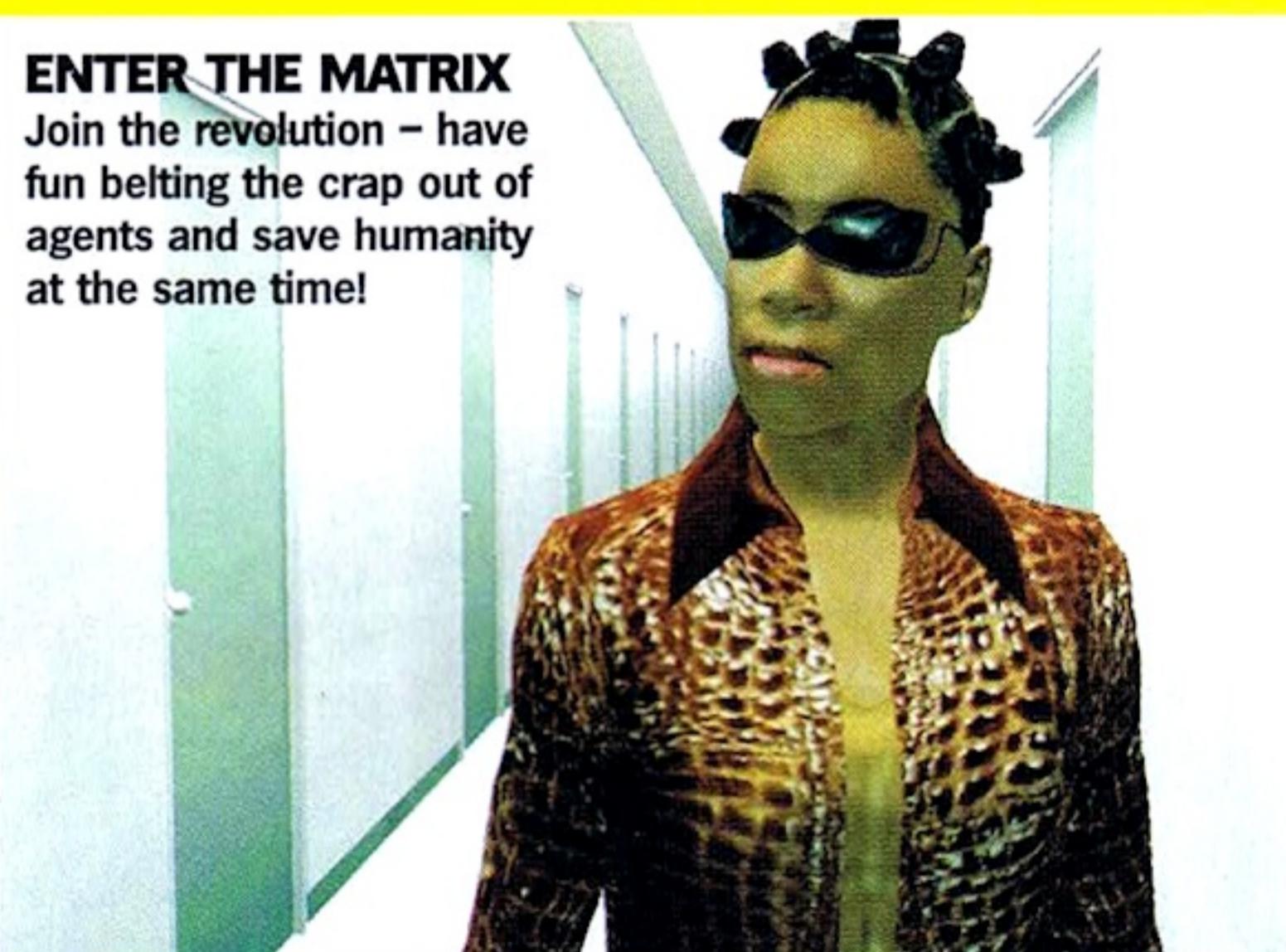
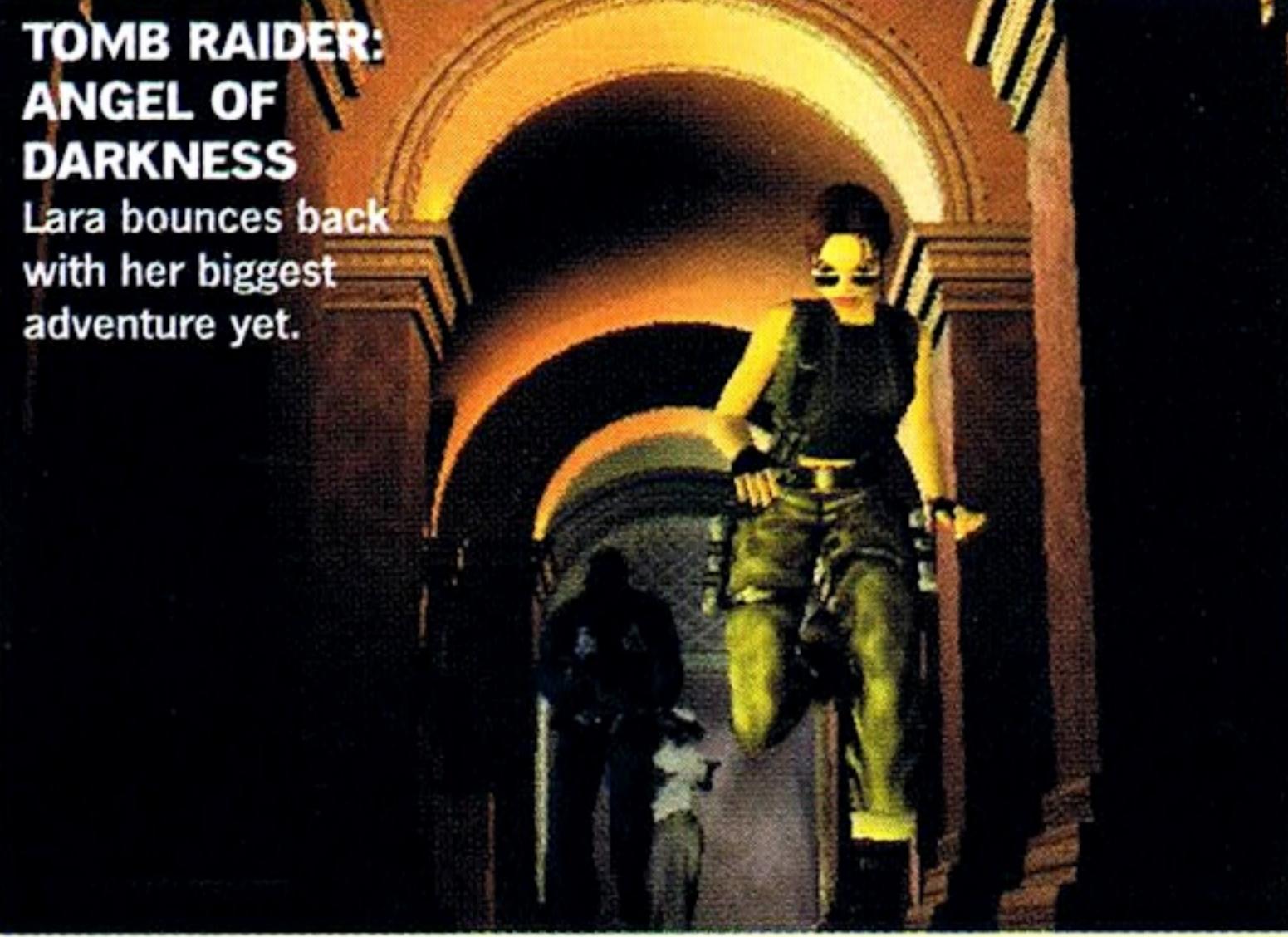
OPS2 GOES ON A CRIME SPREE IN LOS ANGELES AND COMES BACK WITH THE GOODS ON TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA!

TOY STORY

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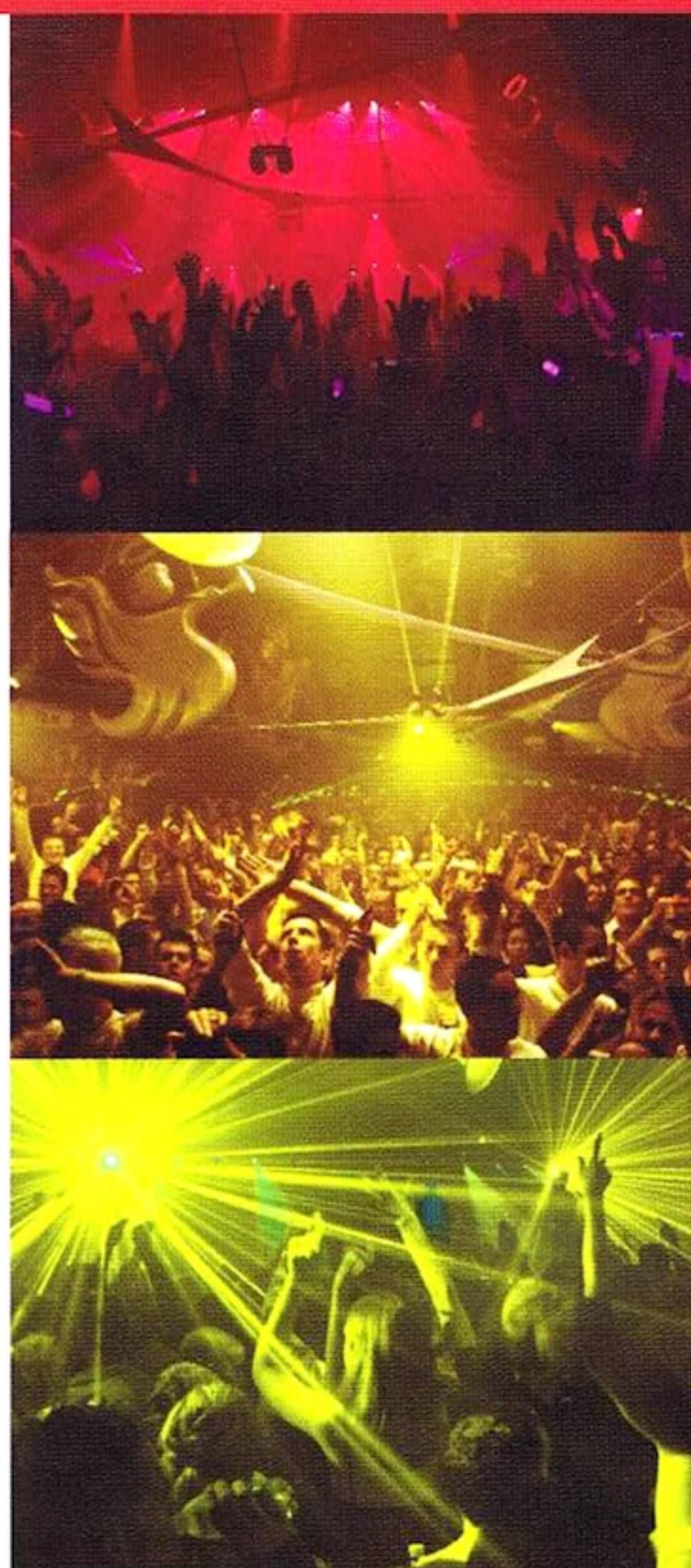
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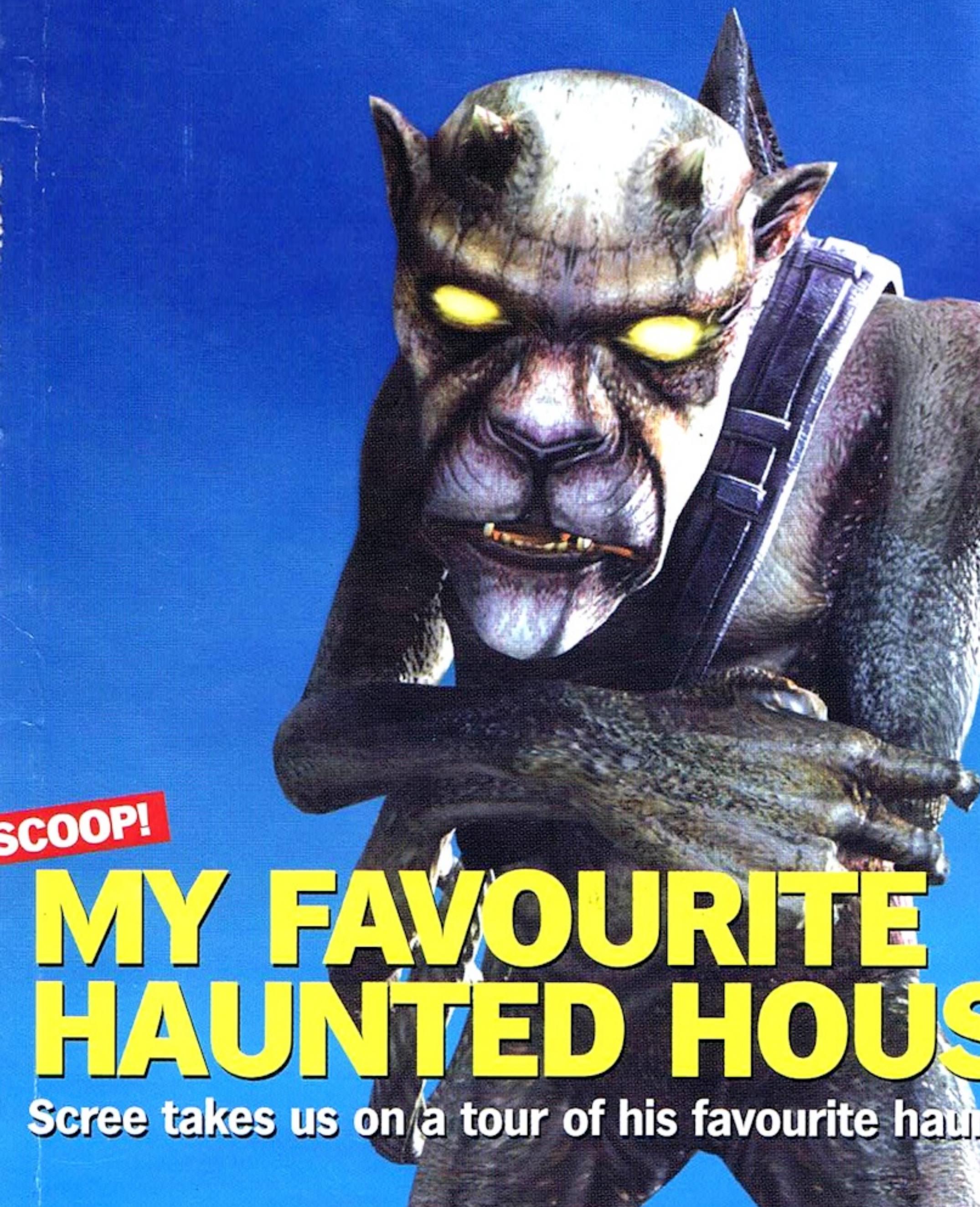
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